SCOTTISH trade union REVIEW

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STATE OF THE UNIONS

Organised labour in Russia and America

IGOR YOURGENS and PETER GILMORE

NEW LABOUR, NEW SCOTLAND
Jack McConnell

CARE IN THE COMMUNITY
Bridget Curran

CHILD LABOUR
Bobby Parker

Also...

Margaret Lynch on PALESTINE

Grahame Smith on PENSIONERS

Rosina McCrae on SCOTTISH POLITICS

17-я типо-литогр. М. Г. С. Н. Х.

ЗОВЕТ В СВОИ РЯДЫ УГНЕТЕННУЮ МОЛОДЕЖЬ

WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE
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Peter B Smith

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Address: S.T.U.R. Ltd,
Dept of Economics,
Glasgow Caledonian University,
Cowcaddens Road,
GLASGOW G4 0BA

Tel: 0141 331 3302
Fax: 0141 331 3293

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Editorial

This year's Budget Day is the 26th November. The summer 'silly season' idea that Major would go for a cut-and-run Budget and call an early election now seems unlikely, if it was ever actually considered by the Government (although, these days, with this accident-prone, sleaze-ridden Government, anything is possible).

The broad media hype now is that things are moving the Government's way on a number of fronts. The pound sterling is standing at a recent high against competitor currencies (although already exporters are complaining of the danger of being priced out of foreign markets); inflation is low and dormant; house prices are rising and the number of people - still large - in negative equity is falling; economic growth is on course to meet the Chancellor's target from the last Budget of around 2.5 per cent and unemployment is falling.

Almost all the pundits, supported by the Tory right and others in the business world who should know better, are urging the Chancellor to go for income tax cuts - note, not cuts in taxes, only cuts in income tax - in order to build on the apparently returning feel-good factor and maximise the Tory vote next May. The Chancellor, if not yet in purdah, is certainly coy about his strategy, blowing hot and cold over the scope for cutting income tax (and other taxes on capital which are being pressed upon him by some in the Government), but cut income tax he almost certainly will.

Yet the case for being a great reforming Chancellor, one who went with the grain of the majority in society but against the grain of the majority in his own Party, almost makes itself. Having campaigned around the slogan "Yes it hurt, yes it works", Ken Clarke should now campaign around the slogan "It's going to hurt some more, but it'll work again". He should go for a great redistributive Budget from rich to poor, reversing the savage redistributions of the last 17 years from poor to rich. At the same time he should further penalise the rich by raising further cash to spend on Britain's badly underfunded infrastructure including social housing, education and health thus creating more jobs. He should cut VAT on fuel and in a few other areas to make life easier for the poor. He should increase the Public Sector Borrowing Requirement, already one of the lowest in Europe, to further regenerate our infrastructure and put more people back into full-time, long-term jobs.

Perhaps we'd better stop there. We might give him too many good ideas. Anyway, who said the 'silly season' is over!

A Parcel of Rogues

Of course we all knew all along what the outcome of this particular consultation was going to be. But, as Campbell Christie, STUC General Secretary said: "It is outrageous that the CBI should claim that it was speaking for millions of workers when it opposed the plans for a Scottish Parliament." In fact, the big man went on, "they are speaking for nothing other than a handful of people."

As usual, he gets to the crux of the question - democracy. The difference between the CBI and the millions of workers in trade unions is that unions are all about democracy.

What are the big bosses so worried about? As we argued nearly a year ago, when the Constitutional Convention delivered its plan, the fat cats are not being asked to pay more Corporation Tax. The Scottish parliament is not going to nationalise them. Indeed we will continue to encourage their investments in our stable nation, developed economy and skilled workforce. In return, we offer them the opportunity of living and working in our attractive environment, and of voting for a Parliament which will have the power to increase - or lower - the income tax rate.

It doesn't sound so bad, does it?

The handful of people who make up the CBI do not like the idea of the majority of the people running their own economic affairs, because they are quite satisfied with the present undemocratic clique which has provided us with deindustrialisation and mass unemployment.

The true representatives of the Scottish people - in the labour and trade union movement - can do better than that.

We will see what the workers think when they vote in the General Election ●

Unions join forces to hold major asbestos conference in Glasgow

The T&G and GMB unions are jointly organising a major conference in Scotland on the issue of asbestos. The conference, which takes place in the Woodside Halls in Glasgow on 6 November, is one of the most important events in the field of health and safety in recent times.

The unions, who are jointly organising the event in conjunction with Clydeside Action on Asbestos, are to be commended on their efforts.

Since the publication of the 'Peto Paper', (*The Lancet*, March 1995), which forecast at least 10,000 deaths yearly from asbestos-induced cancer Mesothelioma by the year 2025, the asbestos issue has taken on on new importance. Asbestos support groups, trade unions, community activists and legal representatives have become more aware of the magnitude of the issue.

Asbestosis is no longer the sole property of shipyard workers and insulating engineers. Many buildings, whether domestic housing, commercial or industrial, which are more than 15 years old are likely to contain some level of asbestos material within their structures. The removal and safe disposal of asbestos is of growing to homeowners, tenants, private landlords and local authorities. This will be highlighted in a number of high profile cases which will be discussed at the conference.

It is important that trade unionists, community groups and welfare rights professionals are in attendance, not only to benefit from the impressive list of expert contributors, but also to take part in the debate and discussion which will help shape the approach to many of the associated problems, which according to Peto et al, will increase in future years. Many observers predict a legal minefield as we approach the millennium.

For this reason alone the conference will be addressed by some of the most highly regarded experts in the area of personal injury litigation, social security law and workplace regulations.

Booking can be arranged through Clydeside Action on Asbestos, 245 High Street, Glasgow.
Tel 0141 552 8852
Fax 0141 552 8352

STUC l bargai

Union-led programme aim impact on the delivery of

On 2 October the STUC, in conjunction with Scottish Enterprise, the Glasgow Development Agency and SCOTVEC, held the national launch conference for its 'Bargaining for Skills' programme at the City Chambers in Glasgow. Over a hundred delegates from trade unions, Local Enterprise Companies, employers, large and small, training providers and further education colleges attended the event. The conference focussed on the role that trade unions have to play in the delivery of skills training to Scotland's workforce and the positive impact and benefits that this can bring to workers and employers alike.

The 'Bargaining for Skills' programme aims to increase the quantity and quality of training for the Scottish workforce by stimulating the demand for training from the workforce. This will be achieved by equipping, via a series of two day training courses, trade union negotiators and bargainers with the skills and knowledge necessary to bring training successfully onto bargaining agendas. The conference gave an enthusiastic and positive response to the STUC's proposal that it form partnerships with the Local Enterprise Companies to deliver this 'Bargaining for Skills' training to trade union members throughout Scotland.

In addition to providing 'Bargaining for Skills' training courses the STUC is working with its affiliates to raise the awareness and profile of skills training among Scottish trade union members. With direct financial support of Scottish Enterprise and the Local Enterprise Company network the STUC will not only train trade

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union negotiators to bargain for skills, but will also develop a wider resource of information, guidance and advice on training for all its affiliates.

Since the launch conference a great deal of work has been done with a number of individual trade unions and the LECs to put in place the first stages of the 'Bargaining for Skills' training programme. The training courses are due to start in late November and will run throughout 1997 and 1998 and are open to all trade union workplace representatives.

If you would like to find out more about the 'Bargaining for Skills' programme or if you would like to attend either a training course or an awareness raising session, please contact David Howie/ Peter Smith on 0141 331 3302, or Ian Millar/ Grahame Smith on 0141 332 4946.

Gay Scotland

For the news you WON'T find in The Herald, The Scotsman, The Sun, the Daily Record, Scotland on Sunday, the Evening Times, the Scottish Daily Express, the Scottish Daily Mail, the Border Telegraph, the Falkirk Herald, the Southern Reporter, the Stirling News, the Dumfries & Galloway Standard...

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Centre for Independent Living in Glasgow (CILG)

Run by disabled people for disabled people

Philosophy

The barriers which people with impairment face cause disability - not the impairments themselves. For many disabled people such obstacles limit the choices they can make and thus the control which they have over their lives. The CIL in Glasgow will provide disabled people with the information and supports needed to circumvent the impediments to doing many things which non-disabled people take for granted. With barriers removed disabled people can participate in society on their own, equal, terms. The Centre will open in late autumn but enquiries are now welcome and information is available from the Centre or its Web server at the addresses given below.

Services Offered

A wide range of services will be offered including:

- ☐ Personal Assistance advocacy - plus recruitment and training for both Personal Assistants and those who employ them
- ☐ Fully accessible training and meeting facilities with an Independent Living library
- ☐ Specialist and general information on Independent Living and related topics

The GILiG Web Server Project

In co-operation with the Wellbeing Initiative and the Department of Social Sciences at Glasgow Caledonian University, and with the support of a wide range of local social service organisations, the CILiG is using the Internet to promote its 'social model' of disability.

Using adaptive aids to replace or augment traditional computer devices makes access to the Internet possible for disabled people and provides many new opportunities. The Centre is keen to involve disability related organisations and disabled people and to encourage them to become part of a virtual information and communication network. In keeping with the Centre's philosophy we are committed to using information technology to break down barriers which limit access to information for many disabled people.

Most importantly, this solution means improved access, more choice and more control over when and what information is retrieved and enables individuals to contribute as well as receive information.

For more information contact:
Eteinne d'Aboville (Centre Manager),
The CIL,
117 Brook Street,
Bridgeton,
Glasgow

Tel 0141-550-4455 Internet http://cil.gcal.ac.uk/

a new Scotland in a new Britain

Jack McConnell, General Secretary of the Scottish Labour Party, accentuates the positive after Labour's triumphant Blackpool conference

A determination to rebuild our country was the main focus at this year's Labour Party Conference in Blackpool. In one of the most upbeat and positive conferences ever, it was clear throughout the week that the party is ready to deliver change after 17 years in opposition. Our radical, but realistic programme for government moved public opinion across Britain. Compared to the split and out-of-touch Tory Party which is not trusted and Nationalists making wild promises while stirring up hatred, New Labour showed again that it was ready to govern.

A new and brighter future

Tony Blair's conference speech said it all, linking our proud history with Labour's modern agenda for new opportunities, democratic change and social cohesion. Blair emphasised the continuing political divide between the elitism and individualism of the Right and the democratic, community values of the Left. The result was overwhelming - the delegates backed New Labour and New Labour will back a new and brighter future for the people of this country. New Labour will take Scotland into the new millennium and into an new age of prosperity. After 17 years of Tory mismanagement, a new era is emerging. We are ready to win power from the crumbling grasp of the Tories and give the Scotish people real hope.

In the conference, Tony Blair and the Shadow Cabinet set out Labour's early pledges. Smaller class sizes, shorter waiting lists, safer streets and opportunities for young people were high on the agenda, all based on a strong economy. Without good education, Scotland can't compete in the world market. Without opportunities and training Scotland will continue to slide down the world's prosperity table. Tony Blair has a vision of Scotland he wants to see become reality. He sees the whole picture - of long-term prosperity, not just the short-term 'fix' the Tories are so fond of - and it's a picture of health for a currently sick Scotland, with a minimum wage and new rights at work.

Deliver for Scotland

New labour has shrugged off the policies of yesteryear and brought in a new modern outlook that has been embraced throughout the party and by the Scottish people. We've taken a new look at what really matters to the Scottish people and made commitments to give Scots a better way of life. We've taken a new look at the party and built a stronger and more forward thinking Labour Party that is ready to take on the Tories. With only a few months to the General Election, we're ready, willing and determined to deliver for Scotland. New Labour is committed to making a difference and we are setting the agenda in Scottish politics. Shadow Secretary of State for Scotland, George Robertson, MP, set out Labour's vision for a Scottish Parliament where the people of Scotland will have a real say in their future. Our policies have struck a chord with Scots and the party in Scotland is growing stronger every month. Our membership has doubled and our record lead in the polls is maintained. The party is united to deliver a Scottish Parliament, with the consent of the Scottish people. New Labour will give Scots the choice with our referendum plan. We believe they will take it. As a democratic party, we believe it is the right thing to do, and the right way to deliver a Scottish Parliament.

The conference debate drew a line under the damaging divisions of the summer and move Labour on to the election campaign and planning for a double 'Yes' result in the referendum which will follow. Scots voting for the whole Convention scheme will secure the future of the Parliament and speed the legislation through Westminster during that first year. And, as we grow stronger, so the weaknesses and cracks begin to show in our rivals.

Like flies in a web

The SNP conference - what a disgrace that turned out to be. Alex Neil's camparison of George Robertson to Nazi traiter Lord Haw-Haw was not only offensive but proved how extreme and bigoted Nationalists can really be. This

Setting out Labour's vision for a Scottish Parliament: *George Robertson at Blackpool*

Winning support from the Labour leadership: *Anne Pearston of the Snowdrop campaign*

'joke' was not funny and not patriotic. Alex Salmond should have shown true leadership and sacked Neil on the spot. Instead, all he showed was lack of courage.

Salmond also showed weaknesses in refusing to answer Labour's referendum challenge. The SNP are lost on the referendum because their tongue-tied leadership will not say whether they will vote 'No' with the Tories or 'Yes' for Scotland. It's not a difficult question to answer. The Nationalists might think they can hide on the issue, but Labour will not allow them to. We will continue to ask this question until Salmond gives an answer for Scotland - before the election.

The Liberal Democrats find themselves trapped like flies in a web over the referendum question. They say they might vote against the wishes of the Scottish people. Can they still call themselves Democrats when they have indicated they might go against the will of the people?

And Labour's two question referendum proposal has finally put paid to the Tories' 'Tartan Tax' lies. Forsyth has gone virtually silent on this issue. His campaign has stalled. He pretends not to hear Labour's call: will the Tories accept the will of the people on devolution? Instead, he stands on a platform at the Tory Party Conference waving a butchered Union Jack and playing the Little Englander. Scots know this man does not represent Scottish interests, he represents a tired, out of touch government which must go.

It's not surprising Forsyth acts in such a manner when he takes his cues from John Major. His speech was dominated by the issues highlighted in Labur's early pledges, responding pathetically to public opinion shifting under his feet, people ready for a real change.

In 1992, he lied about tax he lied about public services and he lied about responding to Scottish opinion. Since then: 22 separate tax rises, £2000 cost to the average family, public services crumbling and even more centralised, secret decision-making. At the next election, they will peddle the same lies again, promises that will never be kept. Major is running scared of Labour because only Labour gives hope to the people of Britain. But everyone who wants change must expose the Tory deceit and promote Labour's alternative. As the election nears, the Tories will become increasingly desperate and sink into the gutter. We must leave them there and win positive support for our campaign.

So, what does Labour offer?

We made our early pledges in *New Labour New Life for Scotland* and we are committed to ensuring we see these pledges through to fruition.

We pledge to:

- reduce NHS witing lists by cutting red tape
- cut class sizes in the early years
- increase job and training oporunities for the young
- deliver a Scottish Parliament with the consent of the people

In the meantime we will continue to turn up the heat on the Tories and the SNP over the referendum. Without complacency we will prepare for government. The Scottish Executive ofthe Labour Party has set up a task force to look at how the Party will operate when in power. We are preparing for power now, so that when Tony Blair is given the keys to 10 Downing Street, we deliver on our election promises and then make a success of the Scottish Parliament for which so many have waited for so long.

Labour has changed - more democratic, more representative, more prepared and more likely to succeed. We now offer a new vision and direction for Scotland and Britain. We will pursue a new age of achievement for all and a decent society.

A society where every individual is valued, where every person has a chance to achieve their full potential. A new Scotland in a new Britain ●

STATE OF THE UNIONS:

The AFL-CIO has always supported the Democratic Party. But the unions are facing huge problems under Clinton's administration. **Peter Gilmore** of the 'small, militant' UE (United Electrical Radio and Machine Workers of America) union reports on changes in the American labor movement ...and the birth of a new socialist party

Labor's d

On a mild spring day in 1994, members of the United Electrical, Radio and Machine workers of America (UE) converged on the Washington, DC headquarters of the US Department of Labor. Carrying signs calling for "Workplace Fairness" they had come to press the Clinton Administration to use its influence on behalf of modest labor legislation then stalled in the US Senate. A thirtysomething official in a suit and tie dashed down the building's long granite steps. Confronting UE Director of Organization Bob Kingsley, he pleaded: "Could you *please* not have your demonstration here? It would be embarrassing to the Administration!"

At the time an associate deputy secretary in the Labor Department, the impassioned emissary is now political director of the AFL-CIO. In that role he continues to minimize embarrassment to the Clinton Administration.

To trade union sceptics, the AFL-CIO's ongoing subservience to the Democratic Party is the best indication that last year's leadership change has by no means guaranteed that the 13-million-member federation has broken completely with its lacklustre past.

Without a doubt, the election of President John J. Sweeney and his slate boosted the spirits of a bruised and battered movement. At last, the nation's top union leaders were vowing to vigorously assert labor's demands. Even the somewhat hysterical newspaper headline claims of "tough" and "aggressive" union chiefs came as a refreshing change.

And there are indeed signs of a reinvigorated labor movement. In perhaps the brightest development of the year, more than 1,300 delegates representing more than a million workers launched a new Labor Party.

Unfortunately there is little direct connection between these positive events. The unions backing the Labor Party do so without the blessing of Sweeney's AFL-CIO. Both developments are a response to worsening conditions for workers and their unions - and the growing sense that the present moment may offer the last best chance to fight for change.

Whatever their self-perception, and despite their nation's indisputable wealth, American workers no longer enjoy the world's best wages and conditions. Factory workers in Japan and 10 European countries had higher average wages than those in the United States last year. (And US workers lack a range of statutory social benefits taken for granted in other advanced capitalist countries, health care being the most notorious example.)

Nearly 30 years of income growth for most Americans came to an end in the mid-Seventies. It has been down hill from there: the bottom 60% of all families saw their inflation-adjusted income decline between 1979-1994, while the top 40% gained. Between 1978 and 1995, the buying power of workers' hourly earnings fell 12%.

As a result of this decline in real income, more Americans are working longer hours to make ends meet.

But not all: last year 1.3 million American workers were unemployed for 27 weeks or longer. The 8,900 company mergers last year resulted in 72,000 layoffs. More than a half million jobs were wiped out in 1994, more than in the recession year of 1990. And hundreds of thousands of workers who lost their jobs in the 1980s are still unemployed or have given up looking.

USA

LPA founding conference - June 1996

ay?

Each economic downturn since the Thirties has yielded to a recovery with successively higher unemployment levels. Economists dutifully declare the current unemployment rate (now 5.1%) to represent "full employment."

While productivity and profits have risen steadily over the past 25 years, reward for workers is not part of the corporate plan. Explains a Goodyear, Inc. executive: "Until we get the wage levels down much closer to those of the Brazils and Koreas, we cannot pass along productivity gains to workers' wages and still be competitive."

Added to this is the recent Republican attempt to rollback trade union rights and social protections, some in place since the Thirties. Republican proposals in Congress have included legalization of company unions (under the guise of employee "teams"), a ban on union shop provisions in collective agreements and an end to the statutory 40-hour work week. Also proposed was a bizarre, fascist-like ban on union literature in the work place. All were repulsed - but will be back if Republicans maintain control of Congress.

And what have the trade unions been doing?

In large measure, reeling from loss of membership, power and influence. The declining living standards of American workers have much to do with the loss of trade union bargaining power.

The organized labor movement represents only 10.4% of the nation's private sector workers; when the public sector is included, the trade union movement can claim 14.9% of the nation's workforce. Forty years ago, the trade unions could claim to speak for one out of every three workers, but now only one in seven.

"We are still losing members as an absolute number and as a percentage of the workforce," new AFL-CIO President Sweeney admitted in July. "We're running fewer (representation) elections than last year, and last year was a disaster."

To remain above 10 percent, unions need to add 300,000 members a year. With more than 100 million workers outside unions, that should not be enormously difficult. But it is, given the erosion of workers' legal rights to organize, bargain and strike and corresponding expansion of corporate power.

In this context, the aggressively anti-labour agenda of the first Republican majority in Congress in nearly 50 years has served as a loud wake-up call for the movement. The old leadership of the AFL-CIO met the crisis of broken strikes, declining living standards and plummeting membership rolls with inaction and what seemed at times astonishingly like indifference.

Dissatisfaction within the ranks mounted following the Republican election victory in November 1994. Lane Kirkland, president of the federation since the death of George Meany in 1979, was forced out. His interim successor and long-time ally, former Secretary-Treasurer Thomas Donahue, failed to withstand a challenge from the "New Voice for American Workers" slate headed by John Sweeney at the October 1995 AFL-CIO convention.

In his many years as a member of the AFL-CIO Executive Council Sweeney had never developed a reputation as a radical. But his appeal last year derived largely from his success as president of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), which doubled its membership in the 1980s to 1.1 million through aggressive, creative and occasionally extra-legal tactics. The SEIU last year shut down one of the bridges into Washington, DC in pursuit of "justice for janitors" (see *Review 72* -ed). He promised the obvious: a dramatic increase in organizing, greater political muscle and an improved public image.

The flamboyant president of the United Mine Workers of America, Richard Trumka, joined Sweeney in office as AFL-CIO secretary-treasurer. Trumka had the advantage of oratorical skills the new president lacks, and his relative youth - being 46 years of age when elected, compared to Sweeney's 61 years and Kirkland's 72. The October 1995 convention also created a new position, executive vice president, and chose Linda Chavez-Thompson to fill it. The Spanish-speaking daughter of a Texan sharecropper, Chavez-Thompson came from the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees.

The new leaders moved quickly to expand the AFL-CIO Executive Council, with an eye to improving diversity in a body largely known for being "pale, male and stale." Efforts have been made to revitalize the largely moribund labor councils. Sixty-five long-time staffers accepted early retirement offers, as the new chiefs brought in younger men and women with a history of labour, civil rights and community organizing.

The new AFL-CIO pledged to spend up to $35 million in exposing the anti-labour record of members of Congress facing re-election this year. The federation also planned to throw thousands of union members into get-out-the-vote action during the last six weeks of the campaign.

Sweeney promised swifter, more decisive aid to strikers. The three federation officers hit the road, speaking at "town meetings" on the theme "American needs a raise" in 30 cities across the United States. Sweeney appeared before religious organizations and the Rainbow Coalition headed by Rev. Jesse Jackson, preaching the gospel of a progressive alliance of labor, civil rights organizations, environmentalists, the religious community and others.

Sweeney and company also increased funding for organizing to at least $10 million, up from about $2 million, and created an organizing department. Mimicking the "Freedom Summer" of the early Sixties civil rights movement, the AFL-CIO hired college students in a "Union Summer" of visible organizing and demonstrations. To everyone's surprise, *Newsweek* headlined an article on the project "It's Hip to Be Union."

Demo supporting Cleveland public workers' rights

"At long last, the AFL-CIO has leaders who will admit the labor movement is in trouble and that something has to be done about it," UE General President John Hovis told the 61st Convention of his union in September.

Although not affiliated with the AFL-CIO the small, militant UE is obviously affected by developments within the only US trade union centre. Hovis suggested that while it might be too early to pass judgement on the changes in the "long overdue" changes within the AFL-CIO, progress of a kind had already been made, simply in the recognition by Sweeney, Chavez-Thompson and Trumka of the necessity to arrest the movement's decline.

UE views with suspicion statements by Sweeney and Trumka in favour of "labor-management cooperation," but there is a more public, and at the moment, more obvious cause for disagreement with the new AFL-CIO leadership.

"Unfortunately, one thing that has not changed yet is the AFL-CIO's relationship with the Democratic Party. It's still business as usual," Hovis said.

Despite President Bill Clinton's many failings, the AFL-CIO gave Tony Blair's "New Democrat," centrist soul mate an early and apparently unconditional endorsement on March 25. Serving on a committee writing the document, federation vice president Chavez-Thompson enthusiastically approved a Democratic Party platform remarkably free of trade union content.

At its convention in September, UE refused Clinton an endorsement, although recognizing the necessity of voting for him and other Democrats to repulse the reactionary Republican tide. President Hovis reminded UE delegates of the substantial case against the incumbent, although his audience needed little prompting.

Four years ago, union members rejoiced at the end of the long Reagan-Bush winter. But Clinton, the people's candidate, quickly established himself as the financiers' friend.

His promise of a "peace dividend" disappeared amidst Republican-sounding concerns of balancing the federal budget. Worse to union members, Clinton cooperated closely with the Republican leadership in Congress to ensure passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement; he later championed the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. By contrast, he exerted little effort on behalf of legislation that would have offered strikers limited protection from dismissal. (That bill failed, despite a Democratic majority in the House and Senate.)

Clinton squandered the best chance in a generation for health care reform, producing a bureaucratic nightmare that would have done more to guarantee the profits of private insurance companies than the right of Americans to decent health care. Recently, in a crass election year manoeuvre, Clinton signed a Republican bill which eliminated the 60-year right of poor Americans to federal assistance. And, noted Hovis, this is a president who has "supported every big business initiative that has found its way to his desk."

"It's true that we can thank the President for his vetoes of several potentially harmful pieces of Republican-backed legislation," Hovis said. "But that's simply leadership by subtraction."

On the other hand, Clinton has no plans to initiate legislation that would strengthen the bargaining power of union

...continued on page 12

STA

Let's start with the economy, since trade unions in any society have to operate in a situation determined by the performance of the national economy.

Well, the economic results we have today may be described as ambiguous... On the one hand, the economic decline that has hit most CIS counties is, unfortunately, still there. In 1995 the gross domestic product of the CIS countries averaged at 58% of the 1990 level. It should be mentioned that the latter had itself been the result of almost a decade's economic recession. Whereas Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan look somewhat better off by comparison, the GDP in Georgia equalled 20%, in Azerbaijan 38% and in Moldova 39% of the 1990 volumes.

The first six months of the current year show that only three countries could boast of a dim prospect for a rise in the GDP. The majority of them, including Russia and the Ukraine, display a continued drop in production (respectively by 5% and 8.7%). In fact, this proves that all attempts to reverse the downward trend in the economic development have so far been a failure. The level of investment in the national economies has also been alarmingly low, a mere 30% of the 1990 figure. Which means that economic and, in particular, technological progress has been retarded for many years to come. Hopes that some leaders in CIS countries pinned on foreign investors have not come true. In Russia, investment from abroad amounted in 1995 to a negligible 3% of the total investment volume, while in Azerbaijan, Belarus and Kazakhstan to less than 1%.

On the other hand, the decline has slowed down. However, the motives behind the trend were rather political than otherwise. For example, the election campaigns held in a number of CIS countries required populist economic measures of the authorities.

According to our estimates, the decline in economic performance has on the whole hit bottom, and most of the CIS countries might now expect gradual improvement in their economies. As concerns social problems, they remain a far cry from being solved. Suffice it to say that in 1995 the monthly average

E OF THE UNIONS: CIS transitional challenges

The trade union movement in CIS countries is still in transition - like the countries themselves. GCTU Vice-President **Igor Yourgens** argues that unions are becoming more relevant in the changing political andeconomic circumstances of the former Soviet Union

wage equalled $5 in Tajikistan, $16 in Azerbaijan, and $20 in Armenia, with only two countries, Kazakhstan and Russia, stepping over the $100 mark. Last year, though, the average wage in Russia shrank by a quarter, and it keeps going down.

Workers in numerous enterprises are not paid for months, with the arrears of wages amounting to an equivalent of six trillion US dollars. A lot of people have been forced to take leave, often without pay, while a great many work part-time.

Although unemployment has not yet reached the "European" average, its level is already quite high. ILO methods of estimation reveal eight million jobless people in the country, or 6% of the economically active population, out of whom only three million are officially registered with the labour exchange offices. It may nevertheless acquire a wholesale character in case of massive bankruptcies of enterprises that have so far been kept "afloat". Unemployment benefits are utterly insufficient: 6% of the wage in Azerbaijan, 10% in Belarus, and 17% in the Ukraine.

The number of industrial injuries and occupational diseases has been going up. Collective agreements are not being honoured at various levels, including the national and industry ones. All political statements about the governments' support of tripartism and serious social dialogue are in actual fact nothing but lip service.

Sometimes we trade unionists hear reproaches that we indulge in "catastrophic thinking", painting the picture too black instead of making concrete proposals as to how the country could be dragged out of crisis.

But, then, what are we expected to do in a situation when our members are being driven to despair?

When they are ready to hunger strike in order to protect their basic living standards?

When they are actually forced to put forward political demands alongside social and economic ones?

The trade union centres in CIS countries would prefer their governments treat them as serious and responsible partners. However, the harsh reality often pushes them to far extremes.

The result is that many CIS countries have recently seen a new outburst of strikes involving miners, power engineering workers, teachers, doctors, aviation workers, and many other categories. All of them have similar demands - higher wages, better working conditions, and no pay delays. It should be noted that this strike movement has in no way been instigated or orchestrated from above, either at national or at industry level.

Recent developments have once again shown that if there is any real force now capable of organising workers' struggles for their rights and interests, it is the unions that are usually described here as being "traditional', or "old-type".

The "parallel" or, as they would rather call themselves "free", unions, that emerged on the wave of political reform and strike struggle in 1989-91, have either started joining the "traditional" trade unions in recent strike battles (as was the case with the independent miners unions of Russia, the

State of the Unions: CIS

Ukraine and Kazakhstan, or the air traffic controllers of Russia), or ceased to play any significant role in their countries' trade union movements.

I believe the mainstream trade unions in the CIS are currently faced up with a number of serious challenges.

They must, almost simultaneously, formulate their strategic line of conduct, head the spontaneous mass discontent unless they want it to erupt into an uncontrollable riot, and prove they are a really trustworthy element of social development.

Naturally, these tasks will vary with specific conditions in each of the CIS countries, but the comon tendency has been outlined above with maximum possible objectivity,

The General Confederation of Trade Unions, GCTU, created by trade unions in the CIS countries in their desire to attain better cooperation and unity of action, has closely been following the integration developments in the CIS. Moreover, we have been doing all we can to help these processes move on.

Today we enjoy consultative status with the principal CIS integration bodies, such as the Council of Heads of State, the Council of Heads of Government, the Inter-Parliamentary Assembly, the Interstate Economic Committee, and others. We are trying to make the best possible use of the opprtunities this status gives us.

For instance, the latest plenary session of the Inter-Parliamentary Assembly, held last May, adopted 16 documents drafted by the GCTU or with its involvement. Those are mainly the so called "recommendatory legislative acts" on social problems that are meant to provide a basis for national legislations in CIS countries.

Economic and social integration has recently been gaining momentum in the CIS, while political integration has been slower and somewhat more sporadic. But we believe that all-round integration has a future, the more so as it is a world tendency. In addition, the euphoria of sovereignties has gradually been giving way to the more realistic understanding that, as we step into the 21st century, all problems facing CIS countries should and must be tackled jointly.

We keep repeating that the CIS trade union movement is part and parcel of the world trade union community.

It is, indeed, so in the sense that both the GCTU and the national trade union centres and industry internationals it affiliates take an active part in ILO activities, seek to maintain international links, and learn from their counterparts in advanced market economies.

It gives us satisfaction that our representatives were invited to attend the recent ICFTU World Congress and that the European Confederation of Trade Unions is about to open its doors to CIS trade union centres.

However, what we lack today is a comprehensive concept of solidarity with trade unions in our region. There was a time when any protest by Western workers, any action they undertook to protect their rights and interests would almost instantly receive support from Soviet trade unions, in whatever form the striking Western brothers and sisters would find it expedient. For example, powerful support was given to British, and in particular Scottish, miners in 1984-85. They were rendered material assistance, invited to spend their holidays on the Black Sea coast, etc.

Can trade unions in our part of the world count on similar support from their Western colleagues today?

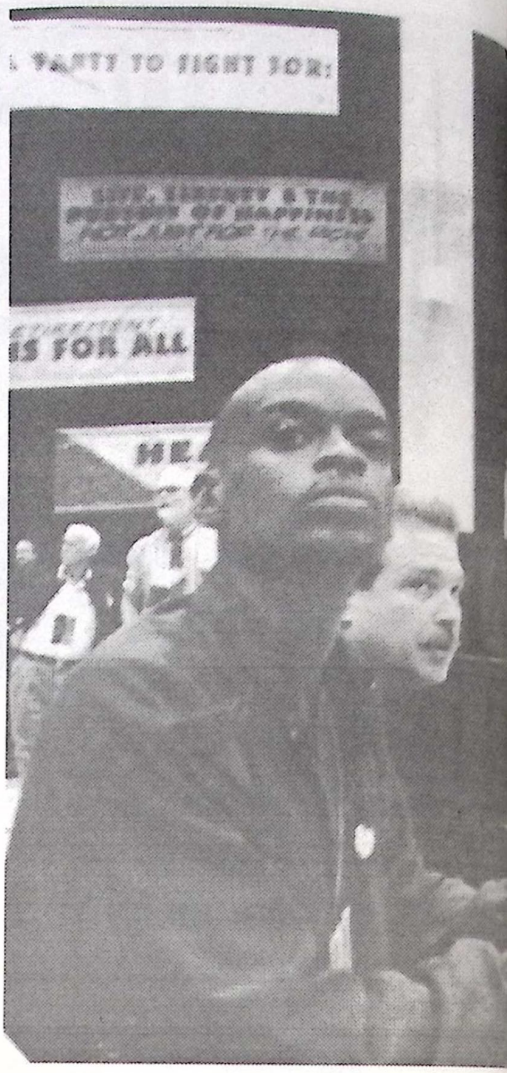
Or, perhaps, some people will rather sit pondering whether or not solidarity with us will undermine the "democratic processes", whether or not the "traditional" trade unions in our countries provide shelter for concealed communists? Now that the transition period in CIS countries is almost over, and we determine perspectives for future development, it is essential for us to know the answer.

Summing up, the situation in the Commonwealth of Independent States remains complicated, contradictory, and unstable, and the nearest developments may yet bring some new surprises.

But the general outlines of our future stand out clearer.

Our vast region will stay intact on the geographic map since it is held together by increasingly strong economic ties, a common past and a common future. It still has a role to play in the world community as it nears the 21st century.

Trade unions will continue being an essential social factor in the CIS countries, a factor not to be ignored either within the Commonwealth of Independent States or in a broader international context ●



State of the Unions: USA

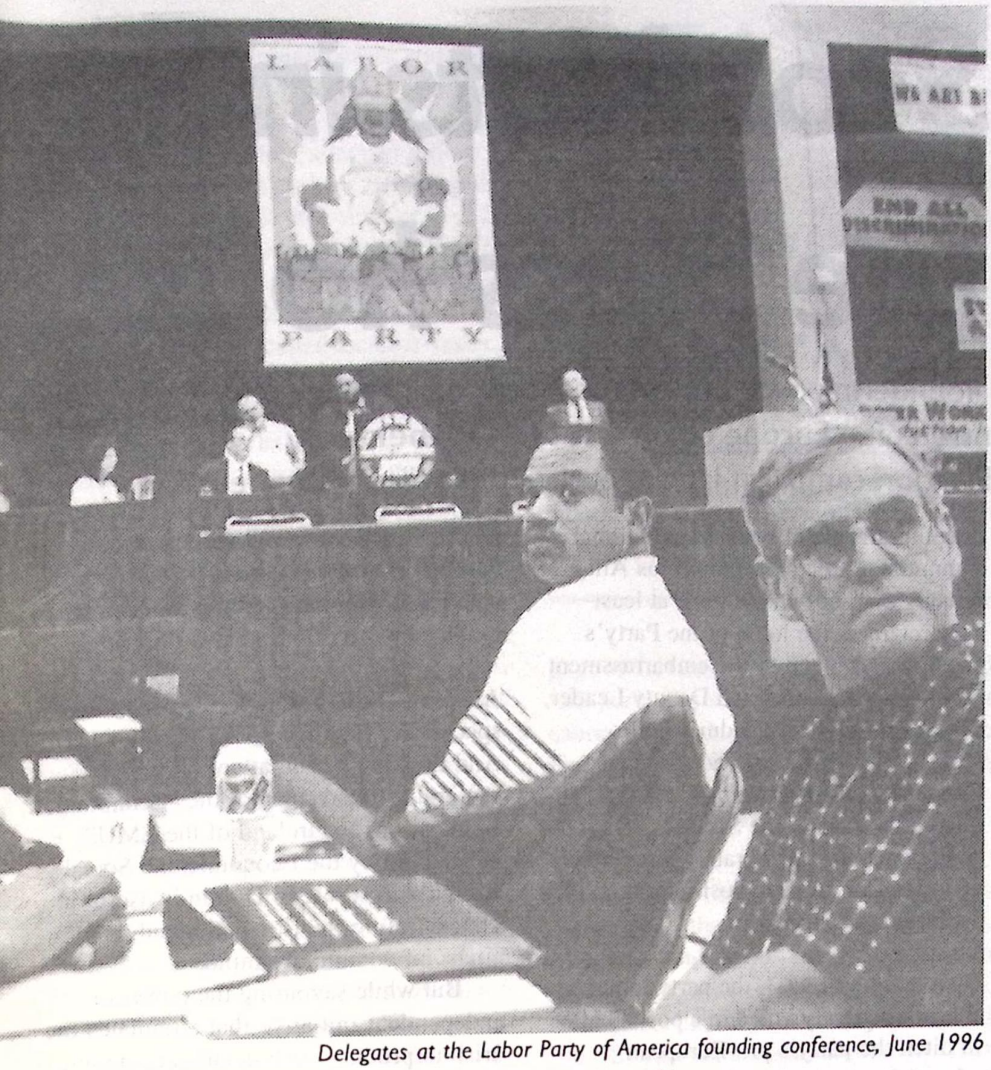
members or restore the right of unorganized workers to join the union of their choice.

Why then re-elect Clinton?

"If four more years of Bill Clinton is hard to swallow, four years of Bob Dole, Jack Kemp or Ross Perot would be downright indigestible," Bovis Said. And UE delegates agreed. Clinton talks of building a bridge to the future, Hovis observed; UE will cross that bridge with the President, and then proceed in a different direction - "the long, winding road leading to the Labor Party."

Long an advocate of a new Political party of working people, UE was an initial endorser of the Labor Party founding convention in Cleveland, Ohio on 6-9 June. Along with the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers, the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees, the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union, the California Nurses Association and the Farm Labor Organizing Committee.

Several other unions - including Trumka's United Mine Workers - endorsed the convention just days before delegates converged on Cleveland's convention centre.



Delegates at the Labor Party of America founding conference, June 1996

Five years of diligent organizing, initiated by Tony Mazzochi of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers, had led to this historic moment. As the convention drew nearer, excitement about the labor party idea grew, forcing organizers to find a larger site. Delegates filled 14 hotels in and around Cleveland. One thousand, three hundred and sixty-seven delegates from 46 states, representing local chapters national unions, hundreds of AFL-CIO local unions, district councils and regional bodies, adopted a constitution (modelled, in part, on the Labour Party and Canada's New Democratic Party) and a program calling for (among other things) economic security and trade union rights.

Perhaps the convention's most contentious debate concerned electoral strategy. Led by the trade unions, the convention decided against a policy of running candidates until after its next convention, two years hence.

Although some critics have darkly suggested a ploy to curry favour with the upper echelon of the AFL-CIO, the decision to abstain from electoral politics in the immediate future has everything to do with organizational, financial and legal considerations. Laws barring use of union monies for elections are among the new party's problems.

The Labor Party, observed UE General Vice President Carl Rosen, "doesn't have a base anywhere right now. We have to organize first, and then run candidates. That's what works in organizing drives: organize the workers, form committees, then challenge the boss for power. If we run candidates now, we'll get slaughtered and we'll never recover."

The "New Organizing Approach to Politics" adopted by the founding convention calls for promotion of "a new agenda by recruiting and mobilizing hundreds of thousands of working people to engage in common non-electoral political activities throughout the year, not just on election day."

A concerted effort will be made to build the party by going "union to union, local to local, door to door to gather support for the Labor Party and its program."

"It's finally the real thing," says Rose Ann DeMoro, executive director of the California Nurses Association, who served as a founding convention chair along with Bob Clark of UE and Bob Wages of OCAW.

The AFL-CIO leadership made little public comment on the busy congregation in Cleveland, except to admonish union leaders not to divert the ranks from the crucial task of electing Democrats. Now is not the time to launch a labor party, said Sweeney, by coincidence (?) in Cleveland at the same time as the Labor Party founding convention. (Sweeney was invited to address the delegates - many of whom are his own members - but he chose not to attend.)

Still, a political formation backed by nine national unions and nearly 300 local unions with more than one million members can scarcely be ignored for long. Backers hope that steady Labor Party growth will cause a rethink at federation headquarters on the advisability of Democratic dependency.

So far, the Labor Party program is completely silent on foreign policy, in area in which the AFL-CIO's role has been notorious. Under Meany and Kirkland, the federation was a stout defender of US foreign policy. At its worst, the AFL-CIO was a willing accomplice of the CIA in its plots to disrupt and undermine left-led unions and governments.

What will the new leadership do?

Under Trumka's leadership, the United mine workers have enjoyed an honourable record of working with unions in South Africa and elsewhere. As he assumed his new position within the AFL-CIO, Trumka declared, "We're going to head toward real cross-border, worker-to-worker solidarity."

The AFL-CIO recently named a new director of international affairs, a progressive-minded woman who held the same post in the Machinists union. And the federation is currently reviewing its international work.

While this could be an indication of positive changes to come, progress is not assured. At present, the US government - not dues-paying union members -supplies almost all of the International Affairs Department's funds.

Finding the will to pursue a trade union, rather than big business, foreign policy may be the Sweeney leadership's biggest challenge. But it is part of the overall challenge of developing a class-oriented, independent trade union direction.

"Twenty years from now we'll look back and see this as the birth of a new labor movement," Joe Uehlein, veteran AFL-CIO official, told a journalist.

He may well be right, although this rebirth is not without its complications or labour pains. But for his nation's sake, he cannot afford to be wrong ●

"VORSPRUNG DURCH RETHINK"
The *Review's* European column

Scot Nats in the glass house

The Tories are not the only ones floundering over Europe, constitutional change and the UK-wide recovery of the Centre/Left. Europe columnist **Neil Robertson** reports from the SNP's General Election campaign launch earlier this year in Dundee

Conference acknowledges *the dangers for Scotland's export performance and trading links with Europe in key industries such as whisky, oil and electronics, and the detrimental impact on inward investment, should the UK remain outwith a single currency.*

We therefore:

(a) reserve to the Scottish Parliament, after consultation of the people in a referendum, any decision to participate in a single currency;

(b) support the proposal that "avoiding an unacceptably high level of unemployment" and "efforts to achieve full employment" be explicitly stated in the Treaties as an objective to be aimed at by member states, with implementation enforced in the same way as the objective of "avoidance of excessive government deficits";

(c) give our unambiguous support to the Social Chapter, deplore the UK opt-out of the Agreement on Social Policy and call on the Inter Governmental Conference to incorporate the Agreement into the Treaties."

No, not another semi-coherent motion from the Labour Party Scottish Executive, but the SNP's flagship policy on "Independence in Europe" after Gordon Wilson and Alex 'Haw Haw' Neil had deleted all reference to the single currency in para 4.1 (a). (The non-sequitur is marked in italics for the benefit of all prospective Labour candidates standing in marginal seats!)

The original wording of this part of the resolution (as drafted by Deputy Leader Dr Allan Macartney MEP) at least made some kind of syntactic sense:

"We therefore:

(a) support the existing SNP policy of joining a single currency, but with wider convergence criteria that take into account real economic and social criteria, not just financial ones."

Keeping this along with the additional commitment to a referendum (as Allan actually advised) would have at least have retained the logic of the Party's position, but much to the embarrassment of the Party's Leader and Deputy Leader, the movers of the amendment (the Party's Vice-President and the Vice-Convener Policy) were insistent that their supporters at the Special Conference had deliberately thrown the official pro-European position out.

Delete, delete, delete.

By a margin of 97:3, the party rank and file subsequently voted in a postal ballot to ditch the party's pro-European advertising campaign despite warnings from the Leader that funds for the General Election were running extremely low. But the much-criticised 'Euro-bunny' logo had incorporated a symbolic Euro-star, designed by image consultants (without reference to the rank and file) to cement the SNP's transition from being a separatist single-issue party to one that is positively committed to a future inside the EMU.

The bunny therefore had to go.

Following the Irish Republic into EMU is of course the Salmondistas' big idea to modernise the nationalist cause; but modernisation starts to get very tricky when fundamentalist hard liners like Alex Neil and Gordon Wilson start throwing wobblers in the works. Hence Alex Salmond's recent letter to Scottish Enterprise requesting technical help.

"Do you really know what a single European currency might mean for your own job or business?" is the question he is suggesting Scottish Enterprise should be asking the nation, according to a recent *Scotland on Sunday* report.

Or as Michael Forsyth's most recent appointment to the quango, Jim Sillars, may helpfully translate when the letter reaches the Board: "Why doesn't Scottish Enterprise commission a detailed EMU study to help the SNP Leadership off Gordon Wilson's hook?"

Alex is of course right to be asking for a speculative Scottish EMU impact study. And drawing public attention to the sectorally-based study of the "Economic Implications for Ireland of the EMU" carried out by the Economic and Social Research Institute in Dublin is useful in concentrating Scottish industrial and financial community minds.

But while savouring the power of independent initiative that stimulates the Irish to produce such detailed economic and industrial research, it is important to arrive at independent conclusions, and remember that inside or out of EMU, Ireland is the competition that Scotland has to beat.

SE is rumoured to have a major study underway on how to "put clear blue water" between Scotland and our rivals across the Irish Sea. And a crucial ingredient of Irish success has of course been the close relationship between government and trade unions in a near decade-long continental social pact between industry, labour and government under the "Programme for Competitiveness and Work". But maybe after the General Election, Lord Haw Haw will oblige the SNP: if only since the key issues of devolution, the Left and Europe now look extremely promising ground for all those who wish to dish the SNP.

"The issue of the currency is at the core of our nationhood", Alex Neil told the SNP Spring Conference, after erstwhile Leader Gordon Wilson had told assembled delegates that his SNP Currency Commission had concluded that talk of an independent Scotland managing to change the Maastricht

...continued on page 29

DIARY by 'The Clype'

CLYPE, clipe, claip, clep: v. to tell tales about, inform against someone; to report, relate, tell: n. A tell-tale; Idle tale, falsehood, gossip.
(Scottish National Dictionary)

Red menace

The Clype has stumbled across stunning, shocking news. "Scandal" seems an inadequate term for the political inferno about to engulf Britain's largest union.

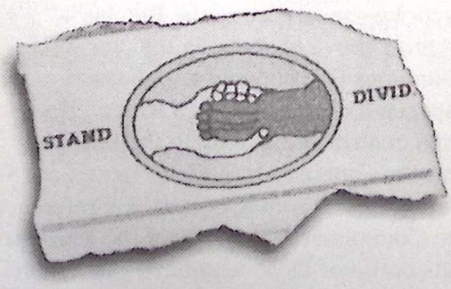
The information which has been supplied to the Clype relates to the events of over 20 years ago, revealed in a new book *In The Public Interest* about the Matrix Churchill scandal, which explains the origins of the union now led by so-called socialist Rodney Bickerstaffe. The relevant section refers to the activities of former MI6 agent, and noted right wing extremist, Sir George Young. I can do no better than quote directly from the book:

"Meanwhile, after his defeat at the Monday Club, Young had re-emerged in a new and clandestine group called Unison, an organisation interlocked with Intelligence, which Young described as "an anti-chaos organisation", described in the Daily Express as "a formidable vigilante group to help protect the nation against a Communist takeover...organised by former Service chiefs, senior ex-members of the Secret Service and MI5..In those days there was a fear of chaos that was tangible. The threat was communism, evinced by confrontational scenes between the Communist NUM leader, Mick McGahey, and the Government".

Surely there must be no less than a full Labour Movement Enquiry into these allegations?

Funny handshake (i)

The indefatigable toilers at the Edinburgh Trade Union Council have their own page on the internet, complete with the graphic reproduced below. Readers are invited to (a) try shaking hands in the manner illustrated; (b) report to the nearest casualty department; and (c) speculate as to just what kind of brothers are running things in the Edinburgh Trade Union Movement...



Funny handshake (ii)

While on the subject of the internet and worthy brothers (what an anorak you are becoming, comrade - Ed.), Netscape browsers who stumble across the home page of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland will surely be stunned to discover that it cannot be linked to Dr Paisley's Democratic Unionist Party, despite electronic claims to the contrary on the Lodge page.

Boss class

The CBI Scotland Annual Dinner was addressed by the Rt Hon Malcolm Rifkind, MP, QC, and Scots bosses' chief Iain McMillan, who delivered a ferocious attack on the Labour Party for failing to respond to a CBI questionnaire on devolution. This was thunderously applauded by the massed ranks of penguin suits in attendance - no suprise there I hear you say.

But what was the reaction of some of the more surprising guests at the gaffers' party - such as Eric Clarke, MP, Helen Liddell, MP, John McFall, MP, Adam Ingram, MP, and Shadow Scottish Secretary George Robertson, MP ? Surely we should be told...

Long spoons

...And lest any of the union dinosaurs get sanctamonious about New Labour dining with the class enemy, they should note that among those happy to tuck in were AEEU leftist John Quigley, and Bill Speirs, Deputy General Secretary of the STUC and stalwart of the Campaign for Socialism.

Conference Watch

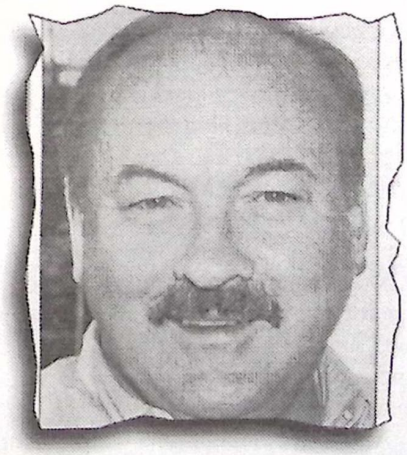
Conference Watch this month received a bumper mail, but unfortunately space means that we can only draw your attention to the most outstanding example of a Conference whose cost is perhaps in excess of its value. Our prize example is of immense importance to the rank and file of the Trade Union Movement, and to all of those who think that the word "new" is essential in front of any meaningful organisation or event.

How could any reader possibly resist the invitation to visit "AnUMan'97", described as the premier industrial relations event for unions and managers? Participants will be able to hear John Edmonds of the GMB on "How to build job security"; Margaret Prosser of the TGWU on "The realities of social partnership" and Ken Jackson of the AEEU on "Getting the best out of skilled workers", alongside Anne Minto of the Engineering Employers' Federation, outlining the employers' perspective. There are only 300 places available, so if you want to attend this sparkling event in the London Hilton Hotel in January next year, you had better get your name in early, especially as it comes as such good value - only £2,228.98.

Of course, at such a bargain rate you couldn't expect it to include overnight accommodation, but there is an excellent "gold card" VIP package on offer which includes two nights bed and breakfast at the Hilton for a mere £434.75.

Hare Hare, Hare who?

Finally, the attached page from the programme for the Celtic v Motherwell game on October 12 was forwarded to me by the Belvedere Celtic Supporters' Club, Fatah Brigade. The allegation that the person photographed is former Hoops star Harry Hood is surely mistaken - can this be anyone other than the top scorer in Glasgow Kelvin Constituency, Mr George Galloway, MP?



Stories gratefully received by 'Clype', c/o *Scottish Trade Union Review*. Usual fiver paid for material used...

Parliamentary Road

The *Review*'s well placed correspondent 'Anonymous' was at Labour's Blackpool Conference. Here's the good news...and the bad news

Only the churlish could deny Labour had a good conference. Amity was everywhere, hardly a cross word was spoken, the platform was largely undefeated. The Blackpool breeze carried the unmistakable message "We're on our way".

The first sign was the fortress-like security around the Labour leadership and most of the conference activities. The second was the corporate gravy train which purred into the railway siding at Blackpool North. The conference was awash with capitalist champagne and canapÄs and every business big hitter from Mercury phones to Mars Bars were busy building the feelgood factor with Labour. It's good to talk to the next government.

The fat cats will not be too disappointed with the anodyne platform beginning to emerge as Labour's Programme for Britain.

But there were straws in the seaside winds which indicated that there's life in the old Labour dog.

The elections to the Party's NEC whilst leaving the Blair group virtually impregnable nevertheless showed a move to the left. Denis Skinner moved well up the poll to 73,000 and Diane Abbott held her seat with an increased vote. If Ken Livingstone had been a woman he'd have been on the NEC scoring nearly 60,000 votes in what has been a quiet year for him. In fact Ken polled higher than Diane Abbott but fell foul of the gender gap trap which requires three women to be elected.

And Peter Hain, now a whip but still at heart a leftie, polled an impressive 42,000 votes.

Although like two swans the dynamic duo of Blair and Brown glided serenely enough along the Blackpool surface, below the water line there's a hell of a lot of threshing around going on between them. Blair and Mandleson are fighting for the clearest of all positions on the income tax question: absolutely no

increase in tax for anyone. Brown, the "Iron Chancellor" disagrees and is looking for a new top rate starting on incomes over ú75,000. Not exactly revolutionary; but taken together with Brown's carefully leaked intention to throw his "windfall profits" tax net more widely than previously thought - including on to some of the corporate cocktail party throwers at Blackpool - at least indicates some stirrings in the social democratic breast.

Robin Cook MP had a good week. Head and shoulders above the rest of the leadership in vision and sheer brain power, Cookie made several important interventions on the fringe. In a carefully coded pre-conference meeting speech he warned against abandoning the poor and oppressed in the charge to the middle ground and in a tour de force at the "Tribune Rally" he staked out what will come to be seen as his powerful case to be the "alternative" Prime Minister should anything "go wrong" with Tony's project.

And signs that the trade unions are saying "this far, no further" to the New Blair Army. "Get your hostess trolleys off our lawn" said unions as diverse as USDAW and the T&G, the Engineers and the GMB. "Lets hear no more talk of divorce", said shop-workers leader Diana Jeuda from her position as Chair of the conference. "This issue (the future of unions link with Labour) is now closed; lets hear no more about it", said John Evans MP, for the Executive but drawing also on his long record in the parliamentary ranks of the AEEU.

Freshly livid from the antics of the teenage Blairite frontbencher Stephen Byers MP at the TUC in Brighton which "Wrecked or Congress" according to John Monks, Union leaders came to Blackpool full of more fire and brimstone than for many a year. And battling Barbara Castle, 85 years young filled the hearts of the conference delegates and real Labour people everywhere with her bravura assertion of socialist principles. Spanish Civil War veteran (how old labour can you get!) and greatest of the union barons, Jack Jones, completed a double act which tied the labour leaders in knots and showed the way it can still be done. The picture of Jack working the floor networking with allies old and new was a sight for sore eyes. No-one really believes that Harriet Harman got her way on pensions, New labour is now saddled with an old Labour style Review Body full of doubters with Jack and Barbara having Harriet over the proverbial barrel.

Even Tony Blair himself made an effort to "include" the left and organised labour in his outstanding conference address. On the raptureometer the speech broke all records; but then Peter Mandleson was doing the measuring. Apart from the singularly inappropriate "It's coming home" rap (or crap) and the faintly spooky appearance of the Butcher's Apron above his head in the closing moments there is no doubt that the speech found and echo in the country and contributed greatly to the best pre-election atmosphere Labour has enjoyed since 1945. From his (unlikely) reference to Commissar Jack Jones of the Ebro, to his praise of those who have stuck with Labour through thick and thin and through his assertion that New Labour is Old Labour modernised not a different party; all had this correspondent at least strolling the boardwalk with "I do like to be beside the seaside" on his lips ●

Table 1

UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE UK AND SCOTLAND 1979-1996

	SCOTLAND			UNITED KINGDOM				
	Official Count 1000s Unadjusted [1]	% [2]	% [3]	Official Count 1000s Unadjusted [1]	% [2]	% [3]	Unemployment 1,000's	Unit Index % [5]
Annual Average								
1979	168.3	7.4		1295.7	5.3		1300.5	5.7
1980	207.9	9.1		1664.9	6.8		1794.7	7.4
1981	282.8	12.2		2520.4	10.4		2733.8	11.3
1982	318.0	14.0	13.0	2916.9	12.1		3154.0	13.1
1983	335.6	14.9	13.8	3104.7	12.9	11.7	3473.4	14.1
1984	341.6	15.1	14.0	3159.1	13.1	11.7	3597.4	14.9
1985	353.0	15.6	14.2	3271.3	13.5	11.8	3709.4	15.3
1986	359.8		14.5	3289.1		11.8	3772.9	13.4
1987	345.8		14.1	2953.4		10.6	3557.2	12.8
1988	293.6		11.8	2370.4		8.4	3065.0	10.9
1989	234.7		9.4	1798.7		6.4	2611.5	9.1
1990	202.5		8.1	1664.4		5.8	2617.5	9.1
1991	220.2		8.7	2291.9		8.1	3366.8	11.7
1992	241.0		9.5	2778.6		9.8	—	—
1993	246.4		9.9	2919.2		10.4	—	—
1994	231.5		9.3	2636.5		9.4	—	—
1995	203.5		8.4	2325.6		8.3	—	—
Current Year								
1996 Jan	206.8		8.5	2310.5		8.2	—	—
Feb	205.6		8.5	2303.0		8.2	—	—
Mar	199.2		8.2	2230.8		8.0	—	—
Apr	201.3		8.3	2223.9		7.9	—	—
May	194.7		8.0	2147.4		7.7	—	—
June	191.7		7.9	2096.3		7.5	—	—
July	206.1		8.5	2158.1		7.7	—	—
August (P)	206.4		8.5	2176.4		7.8	—	—

Footnotes:
(1) These figures represent the official UK unemployment statistics. however they are NOT a consistent series due to repeated changes in the method of counting.
(2) These percentages are calculated from employees in employment and the unemployed. This series was discontinued in July 1986 for national UK statistics.
(3)These percentages are calculated from employees in employment and the unemployed plus the self-employed and the armed forces (the "working population"). This series became the officially-quoted figure for the UK rate of unemployment from October 1985 and was backdated to 1982.
(4) Figures are provisional.
(5) The Unemployment Unit Index estimates unemployment on the pre-1982 basis and takes account of changes in benefit regulations and other adjustments to the system of counting. It is prepared by the Unemployment Unit, 409 Brixton Rd, London SW9 7DG. A note of 30 changes to the official count was printed in *Review* No. 51.
(P) = Provisional
Source: Employment Gazette, Unemployment Unit

Table 2

UNEMPLOYMENT IN SCOTLAND 1989-1996

Unadjusted & Seasonally Adjusted figures by Male/Female [1] (1), (3), (4) - See footnote to Table 1

	No. UNEMPLOYED (1,000s)			% WORKFORCE [3]			SEASONALLY ADJUSTED			
	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	Number	%	Male	Female
1989) Annual	234.7	169.5	65.2	9.4	11.8	6.1	233.2	9.3	168.2	65.0
1990) Averages	202.5	148.7	53.8	8.2	10.5	5.0	202.1	8.1	148.5	53.6
1991)	220.2	165.5	54.7	8.7	11.5	5.1	219.4	8.7	165.0	54.3
1992)	241.0	183.8	57.3	9.5	12.8	5.2	238.8	9.4	182.5	56.3
1993)	246.4	189.5	56.9	9.9	13.7	5.1	243.3	9.7	187.7	55.7
1994)	231.5	178.6	52.8	9.3	12.9	4.7	228.4	9.2	176.9	51.5
1995)	203.5	156.3	47.2	8.2	11.3	4.2	200.3	8.0	154.5	45.8
Current Year										
1996 Jan	206.8	160.0	46.8	8.5	11.8	4.3	193.6	8.0	149.5	44.1
Feb	205.6	158.6	47.0	8.5	11.7	4.4	195.3	8.0	157.0	44.3
Mar	199.2	153.5	45.7	8.2	11.3	4.2	195.0	8.0	150.2	44.6
Apr	201.3	154.6	46.7	8.3	11.4	4.3	197.4	8.1	151.6	45.8
May	194.7	150.5	44.2	8.0	11.1	4.1	196.6	8.1	150.9	45.7
June	191.7	147.6	44.1	7.9	10.9	4.1	196.7	8.1	150.5	46.2
July	206.1	152.8	53.3	8.5	11.3	4.9	194.7	8.0	148.7	46.0
Aug (P)	206.4	152.5	53.9	8.5	11.3	5.0	194.1	8.0	148.2	45.9

(P) = Provisional
Source: Employment Gazette

WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE
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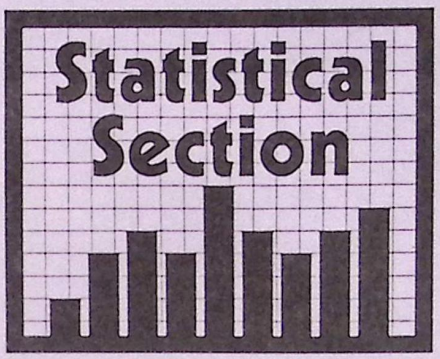

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Table 3

UNEMPLOYMENT BY LOCAL AUTHORITY DISTRICT - AUG 1996

	Male	Female	All
SCOTLAND	**152,506**	**53,869**	**206,375**
Aberdeen, City of	4,682	1,716	6,398
Aberdeenshire	3,061	1,429	4,490
Angus	2,881	1,348	4,229
Argyll & Bute	2,464	976	3,440
Borders, The Scottish	1,734	736	2,470
Clackmannanshire, The	1,523	531	2,054
Dumfries & Galloway	4,165	1,738	5,903
Dundee, City of	6,471	2,162	8,633
East Ayrshire	4,615	1,551	6,166
East Dunbartonshire	2,234	1,033	3,267
East Lothian	1,719	552	2,271
East Renfrewshire	1,597	784	2,381
Edinburgh, City of	12,558	4,285	16,843
Falkirk	4,151	1,419	5,570
Fife	10,886	4,343	15,229
Glasgow, City of	27,574	8,341	35,915
Highland	6,682	2,039	8,721
Inverclyde	2,569	796	3,365
Midlothian	1,638	487	2,125
Moray	1,923	843	2,766
North Ayrshire	4,822	1,767	6,589
North Lanarkshire	10,691	3,645	14,336
Orkney Islands	278	113	391
Perthshine & Kinross	2,625	1,030	3,655
Renfrewshire	5,522	1,997	7,519
Shetland Islands	360	128	488
South Ayrshire	3,438	1,450	4,888
South Lanarkshire	8,538	3,002	11,540
Stirling	2,087	810	2,897
West Dunbartonshire	4,036	1,151	5,187
West Lothian	3,708	1,281	4,989
Western Isles	1,274	386	1,660

Source: Employment Gazette

Table 4

UNEMPLOYMENT BY PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY - AUG 96

	Male	Female	All
Aberdeen North	2,045	627	2,672
Aberdeen South	1,818	755	2,573
Angus East	2,323	1,040	3,363
Argyll and Bute	1,777	675	2,452
Ayr	2,567	1,042	3,609
Banff and Buchan	1,364	571	1,935
Caithness and Sutherland	1,454	415	1,869
Carrick Cumnock and Doon Valley	2,701	921	3,662
Central Fife	2,651	1,091	3,742
Clackmannan	2,030	717	2,747
Clydebank and Milngavie	2,334	681	3,015
Clydesdale	2,164	728	2,892
Cumbernauld and Kilsyth	1,707	740	2,447
Cunninghame North	2,175	829	3,004
Cunninghame South	2,647	938	3,585
Dumbarton	2,679	920	3,599
Dumfries	2,206	955	3,161
Dundee East	3,409	1,116	4,525
Dundee West	3,062	1,046	4,108
Dunfermline East	2,305	848	3,153
Dunfermline West	1,911	739	2,650
East Kilbride	2,127	922	3,049
East Lothian	1,719	552	2,271
Eastwood	1,597	784	2,381
Edinburgh Central	2,517	1,025	3,542
Edinburgh East	1,845	521	2,366
Edinburgh Leith	2,923	921	3,844
Edinburgh Pentlands	1,754	589	2,343
Edinburgh South	1,962	725	2,687
Edinburgh West	1,292	374	1,666
Falkirk East	2,005	654	2,659
Falkirk West	1,928	662	2,590
Galloway and Upper Nithsdale	1,959	783	2,742
Glasgow Cathcart	1,611	608	2,219
Glasgow Central	3,250	914	4,164
Glasgow Garscadden	2,190	498	2,688
Glasgow Govan	2,408	721	3,129
Glasgow Hillhead	2,930	1,231	4,161
Glasgow Maryhill	3,184	1,134	4,318
Glasgow Pollok	2,619	735	3,354
Glasgow Provan	2,700	646	3,346
Glasgow Rutherglen	2,455	731	3,186
Glasgow Shettleston	2,439	671	3,110
Glasgow Springburn	3,403	963	4,366
Gordon	1,392	696	2,088
Greenock and Port Glasgow	2,243	608	2,851
Hamilton	2,632	841	3,473
Inverness, Nairn and Lochaber	2,763	849	3,612
Kilmarnock and Loudoun	2,785	1,038	3,823
Kincardine and Deeside	1,124	496	1,620
Kirkcaldy	2,679	1,009	3,688
Linlithgow	1,914	668	2,582
Livingston	2,059	743	2,802
Mid Lothian	1,638	487	2,125
Monklands East	2,294	768	3,062
Monklands West	1,950	736	2,686
Moray	1,923	843	2,766
Motherwell North	2,585	789	3,374
Motherwell South	2,397	721	3,118
North East Fife	1,340	656	1,996
North Tayside	1,317	625	1,942
Orkney and Shetland Islands	638	241	879
Paisley North	2,342	785	3,127
Paisley South	2,146	769	2,915
Perth and Kinross	1,866	713	2,579
Renfrew West and Inverclyde	1,360	631	1,991
Ross, Cromarty and Skye	2,465	775	3,240
Roxburgh and Berwickshire	960	374	1,334
Stirling	1,798	727	2,525
Strathkelvin and Bearsden	1,702	775	2477
Tweeddale, Ettrick and Lauderdale	774	362	1,136
Western Isles	1,274	386	1,660

Source: Employment Gazette

Table 5

EXPENDITURE ON REGIONAL PREFERENTIAL ASSISTANCE TO INDUSTRY[1] IN SCOTLAND: 1988/89 – 1995/96

£ million

	Fiscal Year							
	1988/89	1989/90	1990/91	1991/92	1992/93	1993/94	1994/95	1995/96
Scottish Development Agency Acts/Scotttish Enterprise								
Land and factory building	18.2	23.5	28.1	23.9	10.3	22.5	30.6	17.3
Industrial Development								
Regional Selective Assistance[2]	38.0	40.6	68.2	63.7	59.2	69.0	77.1	70.1
Regional Development Grant	76.6	59.4	42.0	12.2	8.9	2.8	0.4	0.0
Regional Enterprise Grant[3]	0.3	1.5	2.8	2.7	2.8	2.7	2.1	3.0
Highlands and Islands Enterprise[4]								
Grants	11.1	11.6	10.5	12.3	13.6	14.0	14.4	15.9
Property	7.0	7.2	7.6	8.0	6.9	9.4	9.9	11.1
Total gross expenditure	151.2	143.8	159.2	122.8	101.7	120.4	134.5	117.4

(1) Expenditure in Assisted Areas only.
(2) Assistance provided under the Industrial Development Act 1982 and its predecessors.
(3) Regional Enterprise Grant (REG) consists of two schemes - Regional Investment Grant and Regional Innovation Grant. Both schemes commenced on 1st April 1988.
(4) HIE loans and equity are classed as non-preferential as these are deemed to be similar to non-preferential assistance outside the HIE area. The 1992/3 figure is provisional.

Source: Scottish Office Industry Department

Table 6

REGIONAL SELECTIVE ASSISTANCE (1): SUMMARY OF OFFERS AND EXPENDITURE IN SCOTLAND AND GREAT BRITAIN: 1988/89 – 1995/96

		Fiscal Year							
		1988/89	1989/90	1990/91	1991/92	1992/93	1993/94	1994/95	1995/96
RSA[2]									
New and revised offers accepted:									*£ million*
	Scotland	49.8	76.0	173.0	52.3	71.8	127.0	112.6	94.0
	Great Britain	242.9	262.7	339.7	207.9	224.0	337.0	310.0	313.0
Forecast associated employment[3]:									*thousands*
	Scotland	11.8	13.8	21.2	8.5	11.1	17.3	16.2	12.8
	Great Britain	59.9	55.9	54.4	40.8	41.5	59.6	60.0	59.8
Expenditure:									*£ million*
	Scotland	38.0	40.6	68.2	63.7	59.2	69.0	77.1	70.1
	Great Britain	183.1	176.6	187.5	193.1	189.1	215.2	247.2	237.0
RDG2									
New and revised approvals made:									*£ million*
	Scotland	141.4	48.6	0.1	-	-	-	-	-
	Great Britain	486.2	76.8	2.0	0.2	-	-	-	-
Forecast associated employment[3]:									*thousands*
	Scotland	37.0	8.9	0.0	-	-	-	-	-
	Great Britain	123.2	16.3	0.6	-	-	-	-	-
Expenditure:									*£ million*
	Scotland	50.8	48.8	33.0	7.1	5.6	0.6	0.0	0.0
	Great Britain	221.8	162.6	110.8	47.3	19.3	7.8	0.4	0.6
REG[4]									
Offers accepted									*£ million*
	Scotland	1.8	4.1	4.5	3.6	3.7	2.8	3.7	3.8
	Great Britain	9.4	18.2	17.4	13.9	15.8	18.2	22.4	22.2
Expenditure:									*£ million*
	Scotland	0.3	1.5	2.8	2.7	2.8	2.7	2.1	3.0
	Great Britain	1.4	8.2	12.7	11.4	9.7	12.5	15.2	18.9

(1) Regional Selective Assistance (RSA) under section 7 of the Industrial Development Act 1982, revised Regional Development Grant (RDG2) and Regional Enterprise Grant (REG) schemes.
(2) Figures for RSA relate to initial acceptance dates. Figures also include that proportion of in-plant training grant subsequently claimed back from the European Social Fund.
(3) Includes new and safeguarded employment.
(4) REG scheme is not necessarily job related so job figures are excluded.

Source: Scottish Office Education and Industry Department

Table 7

WORKING DAYS LOST IN STOPPAGES DUE TO INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES BY INDUSTRY — SCOTLAND: 1994–1995

SIC 1992	1994	1995	1995 Scotland as per cent of UK
All industries and services (thousands)	**16**	**71**	**17.1**
Agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishing	—	—	—
Mining, quarrying, electricity, gas and water	—	—	—
Manufacturing	7	18	27.7
Construction	—	3	30.0
Wholesale and retail trade; repairs; hotels and restaurants	—	—	—
Transport, storage and communication	2	43	35.8
Finance, real estate, renting and business	—	3	30.0
Public administration and defence	1	4	4.2
Education	5	—	—
Health and social work	—	—	—
Other community, social and personal services, private households with employees, extra territorial organisations	—	—	—
Days lost per 1,000 employees – all industries and services	**8**	**36**	**—**

Source: Office for National Statistics

Table 8

STOPPAGES IN PROGRESS: INDUSTRY

United Kingdom	12 months to July 1995			12 months to July 1996		
SIC 1992	Stoppages	Workers involved	Working days lost	Stoppages	Workers involved	Working days lost
Agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishing	—	—	—	1	100	100
Mining and quarrying	4	300	800	5	600	1,600
Manufacturing of:						
food, beverages and tobacco;	4	1,000	2,000	11	2,000	10,200
textiles and textile products;	3	500	700	10	9,300	4,800
leather and leather products;	—	—	—	—	—	—
wood and wood products;	1	300	500	—	—	—
pulp, paper and paper products; printing and publishing;	2	400	1,200	1	100	5,400
coke, refined petroleum products, nuclear fuels;	—	—	—	2	2,500	8,400
chemicals, chemical products and man-made fibres;	—	—	—	4	1,900	5,100
rubber and plastics;	—	—	—	3	200	1,000
other non-metallic mineral products;	1	200	200	1	100	400
basic metals and fabricated metal products;	12	2,200	2,300	10	1,200	7,600
machinery and equipment nec;	9	2,200	6,500	8	2,700	6,700
electrical and optical equipment;	11	4,000	4,800	5	2,200	2,500
transport equipment;	16	8,600	31,900	15	19,300	21,200
manufacturing nec.	1	300	100	1	200	200
Electricity, gas and water supply	1	2,000	1,000	—	—	—
Construction	8	1,000	7,300	11	3,700	11,200
Wholesale and retail trade; repairs	1	+	200	—	—	—
Hotels and restaurants	2	400	200	4	500	9,800
Transport, storage and communication	53	52,300	113,900	58	145,600	419,500
Financial intermediation	4	10,700	10,200	1	100	100
Real estate, renting and business activities	2	700	700	5	400	600
Public administration and defence	25	9,800	14,200	26	32,200	163,700
Education	28	37,100	88,900	26	2,800	23,600
Health and social work	11	2,900	4,700	12	2,900	15,300
Other community, social and personal service activities	16	10,500	24,500	14	1,300	2,100
All industries and services	**209** *	**147,200**	**316,800**	**233** *	**231,800**	**721,000**

* Some stoppages which affected more than one industry group have been counted under each of the industries but only once in the total for all industries and services.
\+ Less than 50 workers involved. #Less than 500 working days lost.

Source: Employment Gazette

Table 9

STOPPAGES IN PROGESS: CAUSE

United Kingdom	12 months to July 1996		
	Stoppages	Workers involved	Working days lost
Pay: wage-rates and earnings levels	65	144,700	435,900
Pay: extra-wage and fringe benefits	23	19,300	63,500
Duration and pattern of hours worked	11	17,500	82,700
Redundancy questions	42	14,800	50,200
Trade union matters	13	1,500	6,300
Working conditions and supervision	10	6,000	17,500
Manning and work allocation	42	17,800	71,900
Dismissal and other disciplinary measures	27	10,200	13,100
All causes	**233**	**231,800**	**721,800**

Source: Employment Gazette

LOW PAY REPORT

by Staff of the Scottish Low Pay Unit

Low pay: Scotland 1995

Low pay in 1995

The Unit's low pay threshold has increased to £5.68 an hour or £215.47 a week. The point at which the Unit believes a minimum wage should be introduced, half median male earnings, has risen to £4.26 an hour (£161.60 a week). The numbers and proportions of workers who were paid below the low pay threshold in 1995 are shown in Table 1. Overall, 440,000 full-time workers (30.7 per cent) were paid less than £215.47 a week. Amongst part-time workers, 73.1 per cent were paid under £5.68 an hour. Women accounted for 70.1 per cent of low paid workers and although part-time workers are only 27.2 per cent of the workforce., they represent 46.3 per cent of low paid workers.

Who benefits from a minimum wage?

Table 2 shows the number and proportion of workers who fell below the Unit's minimum wage target of £161.60 a week or £4.26 an hour. While 12 per cent of all full-time workers were paid below £161.60 a week, most of the workers affected are women. Amongst part time workers 22.5 per cent of workers fell below the hourly minimum wage target of £4.26. Overall there were 435,000 employees, or 22.5 per cent of Scottish employees being paid less than the minimum wage target. Three quarters of the beneficiaries of the introduction of a minimum wage at this level would be women, and 59.8 per cent are part-time workers.

The pay divide

The divide between high and low paid workers in Scotland is shown in figure 1. It highlights the extent to which average earnings conceal divisions in earnings. The gap is significantly greater amongst non-manual workers than manual workers, and the variation in pay is more significant amongst men than women. At the extreme ends of pay in Scotland, the lowest paid 10 per cent of manual women received less than £117.30. By contrast, the highest paid 10 per cent of non-manual men were paid £659.10 - 5.6 times as much.

The gender gap

The gap between male and female earnings is is still going strong. Women in Scotland were paid 72.5 per cent of male earnings in 1995. Their average hourly earnings excluding overtime pay were 80.8 per cent of male hourly earnings.

The gender divide is reflected in all aspects of earnings, whether it is hourly or weekly pay that is examined, and whether manual or non-manual workers are considered. A key component of the disproportionate numbers of women amongst low paid workers is their continued over-representation amongst part-time workers. Although the number of men who work part time is increasing, women still account for more than four in every five part-time employees.

If the pay divide between full-time, women and men seems large, there is a yawning gap to bridge for part-time workers. Full-time men in Scotland were paid an average of £8.39 an hour (excluding overtime) in 1995. Full-time women were paid £6.78 an hour, but part-time women received only £5.1 3 an hour in 1995 to only 61.1 per cent of male hourly earnings. Part-time workers may have equal rights to employment protection now, but they remain systematically undervalued in the workplace.

Table 1
Low paid adult employees in Scotland in 1995
(gross pay not included)

	%	number
Full-time		
Women	47.5	260,000
Men	20.1	180,000
All full-time	30.7	440,000
Part-time		
Women	73.6	315,000
Men	69.8	65,000
All part-time	73.1	380,000
All workers	**42.6**	**820,000**

Table 2
Workers below the Minimum Wage Target* in 1995
(gross pay not included)

	%	number
Full-time		
Women	47.5	260,000
Men	20.1	180,000
All full-time	30.7	440,000
Part-time		
Women	73.6	315,000
Men	69.8	65,000
All part-time	73.1	380,000
All workers	**42.6**	**820,000**

(*below £161.60 a week or £4.26 an hour)

Low pay and insecurity

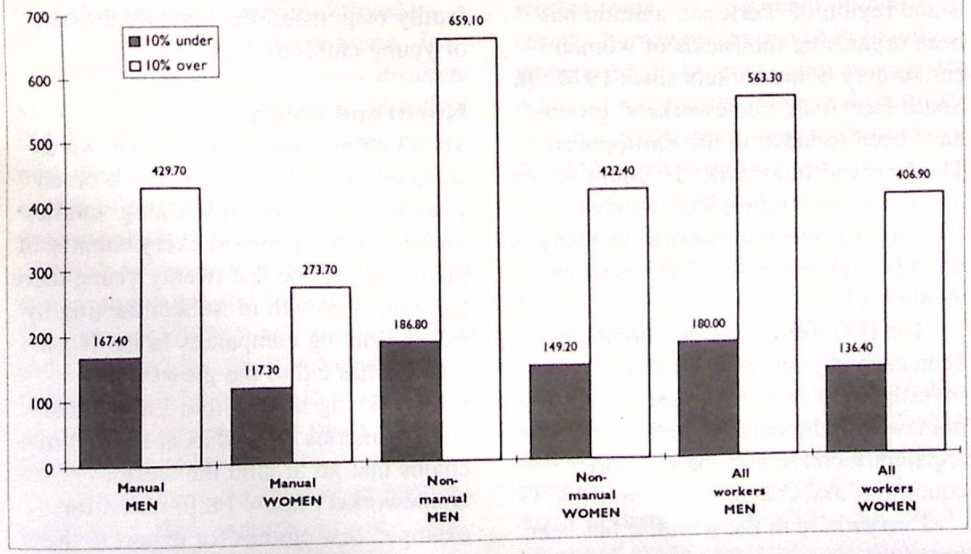
Scotland has the greatest gap between high and low paid workers of all regions outside the South East. In common with Britain as a whole, basic hours of work increased between 1994 and 1995, particularly amongst men. By comparison hours of work for part-time workers reduced from an average of 20.5 hours a week in 1994 to 19.8 hours a week in 1995.

It is worrying that 22.5 per cent of workers in Scotland are still being paid less than the Unit's minimum wage target, including half of all part-time workers.

For many workers, the working environment is one of enforced flexibility and insecurity. Low paid workers may be most affected by this culture at present, but unexpected and unilateral changes to pay and conditions are becoming all too common.

In the meantime, as with the abolition of the Wages Councils in 1993, it is those workers most vulnerable to unemployment and low pay who continue to feel the full force of hostility towards workers' rights ●

Figure 2: Weekly pay dispersions, Scotland 1995



victory for homework

At its annual conference held in June of this year, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) adopted a Convention, which is supplemented by a Recommendation, on Home Work. This was an historic victory for homeworkers and their organisations. The Convention lays down an international standard of equal treatment of homeworkers as a basis for the introduction of national laws, policies and programmes to protect and benefit homeworkers.

The adoption of the Convention is a first step only. It will take further campaigns by homeworkers' organisations, trade unions and others to ensure that the standards set by the ILO are translated into practice in each country. And it will take protracted work of grassroots organising to ensure that homeworkers are in a position to take advantage of new rights and policies

The adoption of the Convention is still a major victory. It has brought recognition to millions of homeworkers around the world who were previously invisible. Homework, it was thought, was a leisure time activity by housewives or a way of earning 'pin money'. In industrialised countries like Britain or the USA, it was thought to be a remnant of the past. In developing countries, it would die out as their economies were modernised.

It has now been recognised that homeworkers make a major contribution to the economy, in both modern and traditional industries. Yet they are, in most countries, without any form of employment protection or social security cover. When there is work, they have an income, usually very low. When there is no work, or they are sick or too old to work, they have nothing.

Homeworkers are mainly poor women, working in many different goods, from embroidery to electronic components. HomeNet, a based workers set up in 1994, has campaigned for the recent ILO

Organising

A major factor in winning recognition for home workers has been the grassroots organising that has been done over the last twenty years. In India for example, SEWA - the Self Employed Women's Association - has been organising homebased workers in jobs such as bidi (cigarette rolling; aggarbatti (incense) rolling; garment-machining; embroidery; block printing and many others. SEWA, as a women's trade union has also long campaigned through the international trade union movement for the ILO to adopt a convention on Home Work.

In Britain the National Group on Homeworking has been co-ordinating work around homework since the early 1980s. In Madeira, an autonomous island region of Portugal, a union has been organising thousands of women embroidery homeworkers since 1974. In South East Asia, homeworkers' groups have been founded in the Philippines, Thailand and Indonesia. In South Africa a new women's union was founded in 1994 to organise poor women working in the informal sector: the Self Employed Women's Union.

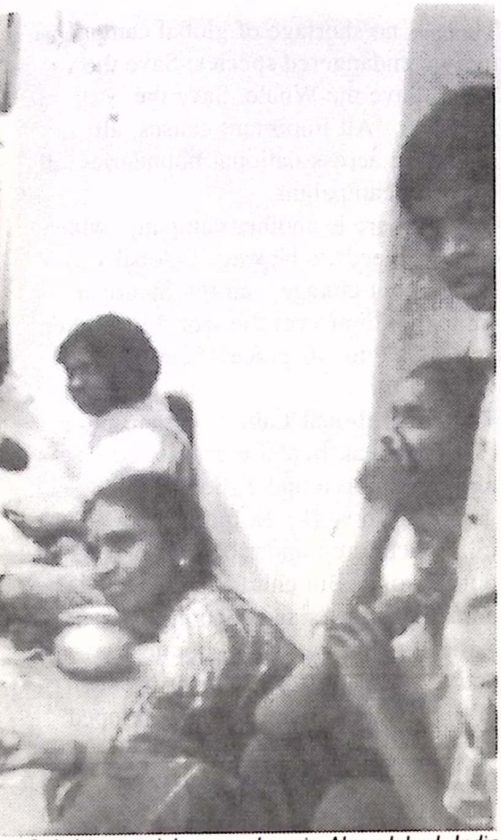
The ILO itself and other bodies have been carrying out research and investigations into the extent of homework; the reasons behind its apparent increase and the pay and conditions associated with homework.

Everywhere in the world, it has been found that the majority of homeworkers are women who try and combine earning an income from homework with their family responsibilities, usually the care of young children.

North and South

The clothing industry is well known as an employer of homeworkers. Women work in their homes machining clothes for employers in almost every country of the world. In the last twenty years, there has been a growth in subcontracting by major clothing companies in the North and this has led to the growth of homeworking both within Europe and North America as well as at the end of chains that go around the world. Homeworkers in the Philippines, for example, sew clothes for export to the USA and in Bangkok women machine garments for export to Europe and the

ers



Bidi (cigarette) homeworkers in Ahmedabad, India

ntries, producing many different
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vention on homeworkers rights

Middle East.

Other forms of more traditional textile work are also done at home. In Gujarat, India, women do many different kinds of embroidery. Whereas once they did the work for their own family's use, now they often sell their products. The export of traditional handicraft is a growing trade in Gujarat. In Scotland and Ireland, women do hand-knitting for major companies and for export. In Thailand, production and weaving of silk and other textiles is often found in the villages, done by women in the slack agricultural season. Now many of their products are exported.

Footwear and other forms of leather work are another major source of homework. In footwear, the most common job put out to homeworkers is the sewing together of the upper part of the shoes, including attaching decorations. This is found in mass production shoes, of medium to low quality, where women sew the uppers, in for example Portugal and Thailand. In Italy, the production of high quality leather shoes is based on networks of small highly specialised firms and artisan workshops, which in turn depend on homeworkers for some of the labour-intensive jobs.

Homeworking is not confined to these more traditional jobs. The West Yorkshire Homeworking Unit publishes an A-Z of homeworking with a list of 100 different kinds of jobs found in that area including electronics, wiring, electrical assembly, collating and packing for the print industry and plastics assembly. In India and other countries, millions of women roll bidi (cigarettes).

In Germany the main engineering union IG Metall employs a homeworking officer who carries out negotiations for homeworkers working for major car producers. In the USA, one major car producer redesigned a whole production line in order to put out component assembly to women in a depressed agricultural area. In Brazil, one researcher into the electronics industry found that it had recently decentralised all its production. Tracing the chain of subcontracting downwards, he found homeworkers doing much of the assembly work.

A flexible workforce

From an employer's point of view, the reason for using homeworkers is that they make up a cheap and flexible workforce. Even when the hourly wage rate is comparable to that for a factory worker (only true in a small minority of cases), homeworkers can be used only when needed. In most cases, savings are made on wage costs. No social security or pension payments have to be made. In addition an employer saves on overheads such as rent, capital equipment, and running costs.

In a competitive economy, the use of homeworkers is increasing in order to lower production costs and keep overheads and permanent staff to a minimum. Researchers in Spain found that whole textile and footwear industries and close down in some areas and moved production to small workshops and homeworkers in rural areas. Although there had always been a tradition of homework, researchers linked current

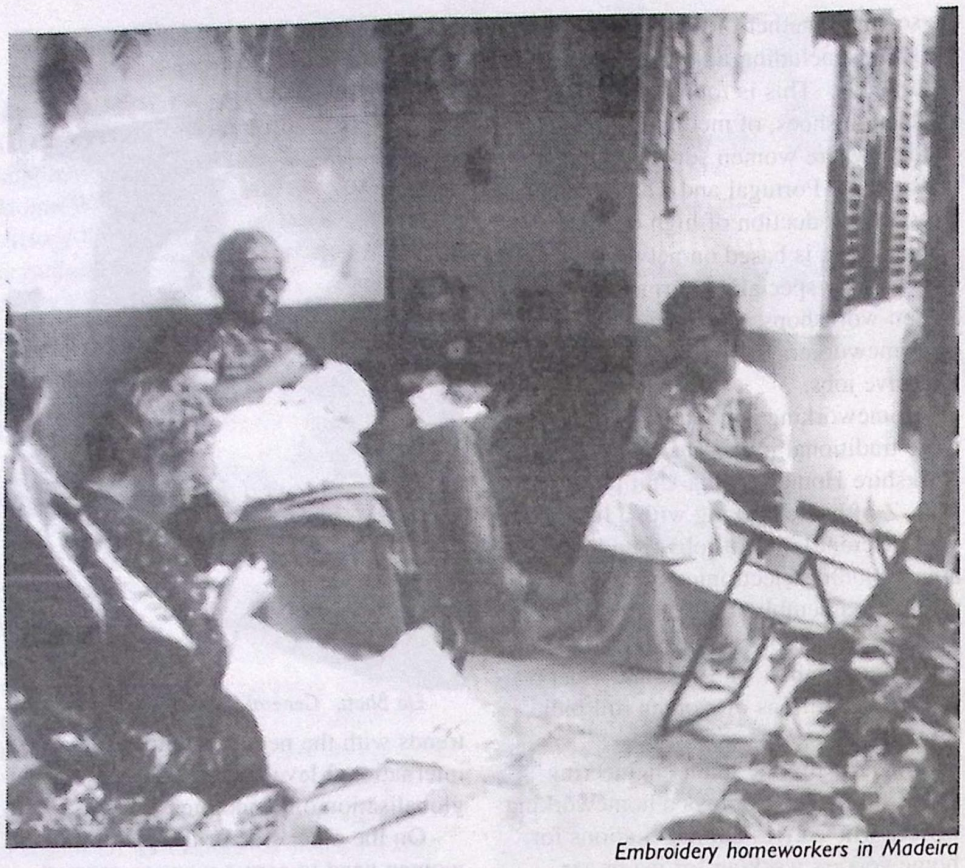
Ela Bhatt, General Secretary of SEWA, India

trends with the need to compete on an international level and the increasing globalisation of economies.

On the other side of the picture women need to earn a wage to support their families. In industrialised countries like Britain the unemployment and the polarisation between rich and poor has led to a desperate need for women to earn money, however low the wages. In major urban areas throughout Northern Europe and North America many black and immigrant women find homework the only option open to them. In many rural areas of Asia, families can no longer support themselves by agriculture and need an additional source of income. In Ahmedabad where SEWA is based, the textile mills for which the city was once famous are closing down. With the men unemployed women's income from homework has become even more crucial. And all over the world, there are growing numbers of women who head their households, without a second wage from a man.

Homeworkers are rarely counted in official statistics or labour surveys. The information about the extent and nature of homework has mainly come from women's trade unions or organisations working at the grassroots.

SEWA now unionises over 200,000 poor women workers of whom about 40% are homeworkers. SEWA recruited 1,000 members in its first year, of whom some are homebased. In many countries in Europe attention is now being paid to ways of organising homeworkers. In Canada, UNITE, the main clothing union, has set up a homeworkers'



Embroidery homeworkers in Madeira

association whose members are mainly drawn from the Chinese-Vietnamese community. In Australia, the Textile, Clothing and Footwear Union organised a major campaign in 1995 to contact outworkers and has now begun to win agreements from retailers on good employment practice in relation to homework.

Initially many trade unions took a stand that homework was a threat to their organised members and adopted policies that it should be banned. More recently however, they have changed this position and at the ILO, the workers' group fought solidly for the Convention. The employers' were, firmly opposed to a Convention and governments were divided.

Making the Convention a reality

The challenge now is to make the fine words of the Convention a reality for millions of homeworkers around the world. In order to do this, trade union and other independent organisations need to work together and learn the lessons of organising homeworkers. Homeworkers have shown that they can organise themselves if given the opportunity.

Trade unions tend to concentrate on the defence of pay and conditions of the workforce with a direct approach to employers. However, a broader approach is needed in organising homeworkers who are usually in a weak bargaining position and afraid of losing their work. Equally important is the need to promote alternative employment; to enable women to have access to credit or training; and to tackle the day to day issues in women's lives, such as housing, health and childcare. Pay and conditions can be taken up at a later stage once basic organisations and a collective strength have been built.

There is also a need for broad alliances in the organisation of homeworkers. Trade unions need to work with women's organisations, cooperatives, researchers and others. Fair trade campaigns are bringing together workers' organisations with consumers, church groups and development organisations and should also focus on homeworkers' pay and conditions in, for example, the clothing industry.

Another aspect of the homeworkers' campaigns are the international links which need expanding and strengthening. The experience of working with homeworkers can be exchanged and lessons learned from different parts of the world.

Now production is organised on a global basis, organisation also needs to be global. The victory at the ILO marked an important victory in building this international campaign. It can also be the start for a campaign reaching out to millions of yet unorganised homeworkers●

child

time for a

There is no shortage of global campaigns to save endangered species: Save the Tiger, Save the Whale, Save the Elephant. All important causes, all organised across national boundaries, all effective campaigns.

But there is another campaign which urgently needs to be waged globally to bring about change - an international campaign to protect the world's children and outlaw the disgrace of child labour.

The International Labour Organisation estimates that there are at least 200 million children under the age of 14 going out to work. In India alone 102 million children under the age of 16 are put to work. But child labour is not just a hallmark of Asian economies. In Africa one in five are economically active. In Latin America it is between 10% and 25%. Even in the developed economies the use of child labour is rife with 5 million employed in the USA and over 1 million children in the UK out at work.

Some are working in clothing factories others are making toys or assembling electronic games others still are employed on building sites. Some are even put to work as prostitutes.

And the fear is that a bad situation could get even worse.

Fifteen years ago 80% of the world's population lived behind some form of trade barriers. With the completion of the latest General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) as much as 95% of the world's population is now living and working in free trade areas with no restrictions on capital movements. And with no social or environmental clause in GATT the likelihood is that new levels of greed and exploitation will be sunk to. Child labour could be on the increase.

Of course child labour is cheap and serves to undercut jobs in the advanced industrial countries. But the new campaign, we need to wage, must not be

labour:
global campaign

The ILO estimates that 200 million children under 14 are working world-wide. **Bobby Parker**, Scottish Regional Secretary of the GMB calls for a global campaign to end child labour

based on narrow economic self preservation.

The greatest shame of child labour is not the effect it has on the dole queues of Scotland, important though that is, the real scandal is the theft of educational opportunities and the lost childhoods of 200 million children.

So to all political parties in Britain, the message must be that if investment in education and training is good enough for British children then it should be good enough for children in the rest of the world too. That means that at the World Trade Organisation conference, to be held later this year, there must be a resumption of pressure for a social clause in GATT which includes a ban on child labour.

An incoming Labour Government must make a social clause in GATT as well as the Social Chapter in Europe a key plank of its Trade and Industry policy.

History teaches us that political change maybe slow and only comes from pressure from below.

That is why GMB has launched its own "Fair Trade Code of Conduct" aimed at individual companies. We are calling for a Fair Trade Code to be jointly agreed by multi-national companies and unions covering workers' right. These should include:

Trade Union Rights

- ☐ **Equality of treatment**
- ☐ **Minimum wages**
- ☐ **Maximum hours**
- ☐ **Health & safety**
- ☐ **Employment security**
- ☐ **Minimum social benefits**
- ☐ **Outlaw of forced labour**
- ☐ **Decent environmental standards**
- ☐ **Prohibition on child labour**

The Code should apply to all subsidiaries and all suppliers of all multi-national corporations. In each company the Code should be policed by a Compliance Council comprising company representatives, workers and independent outsiders. Every multi-national company is called on to set up an Ethics Advisory Committee drawn from experts outside the company.

Global campaigns are notoriously difficult to organise but on child labour progress is already being made.

Levi Strauss, the jeans manufacturer, adopted a Code of Conduct for its suppliers back in 1992. After checking up on 700 suppliers world wide they recently cancelled five contracts, demanded changes to 175 and pulled out of Burmah and China altogether.

Meanwhile in post apartheid South Africa, Nelson Mandela's Government has already begun to tackle child labour.

New legislation has been drafted which is designed to enforce a total ban on the employment of children under the age of 15 years and tighten up the regulations governing 15 to 18 year olds. A Green Paper entitled "Policy Proposals for a New Employment Standard Statute" published by the Labour Ministry in February 1996 is expected to be law by the end of the year.

Here again, Mandela's Government is leading the rest of Africa.

Child labour is not only an emotive issue. It is a political and economic issue too. That is why it must be given top priority by the political parties. But if it cannot be eradicated by political and industrial pressure alone the option of economic pressure through consumer action cannot be ruled out.

In successful global campaigns - to end apartheid or more recently to stop the dumping of the Brent Spar - consumer boycotts played a critical role.

The trade union movement must look to this form of action as a way of reinforcing its traditional role inside the workplace. Unions must act as a bridgehead between workers and consumers. That is the way forward for the global campaign to end child labour.

It is time the whole labour movement gave the campaign its total support ●

care in the community

Bridget Curran (left) with USDAW shop steward Helen O'Hara

Care in the Community has been nothing if not controversial. USDAW's **Bridget Curran** recently led a union Women's Committee session on the issue and reports on the problems and challenges raised by the government's policy

The recent community care session organised by USDAW's Women's Committee covered a lot of ground. Drawing upon local experiences of community care in operation across Scotland, we talked at length about the issues and problems experienced by USDAW women members, more of which later.

We began, however, with a brief introduction to community care.

What does it mean? Who is it for? Why was it reformed? What charges were introduced by the NHS and Community Care Act 1990?

Briefly, community care is basically about looking after people in their own homes rather than in large institutions. Very many people need community care:

- people who are elderly and need help, perhaps because of illness or dementia
- people who have a disability
- children and young people with special needs
- people with mental health problems
- people who have learning disabilities
- people with alcohol or drugs problems
- people dying with HIV or AIDS

Although the driving force underpinning the Government reforms was the spiralling cost of residential care for elderly people, the need to reform community care was widely supported.

Funding, for example, was tied up providing institutional care, which prevented the development of suitable support and housing in local communities. People living in institutions are a small percentage of those needing help - the vast majority already live at home, often not receiving the support they need. And people living in institutions could have a much improved quality of life were appropriate community based services and supports more available.

Very substantial changes, intended to alter the way that social and health care services are delivered and funded, were introduced by the NHS and Community Care Act 1990. Social Work authorities, for example, are required to:

- produce, publish and consult on community care plans for the development of community care services
- be responsible, in collaboration with medical, nursing, and other interests for assessing individual need, designing care arrangements and securing their delivery within available resources
- promote the use of the independent sector (voluntary sector and private sector)
- assume responsibility for public financial support of people requiring private and voluntary residential care
- establish 'arms length' inspection units to monitor standards, initially in residential care in the voluntary, private and public sectors
- apply a new specific grant to develop social care for severely mentally ill people, people with dementia and those with head injuries

The implementation of the NHS reforms following the Act gives the heath board primary responsibility to:

- assess the health status of its resident population and set priorities for improvement of health
- promote healthy lifestyles, environments, workplaces and communities,
- establish priorities for health care in consultation with local people and interests
- purchase health services from NHS providers
- work closely with GP's and other independent community practitioners to improve primary care services
- work closely with local authorities and others to implement the community care reforms

Bridget Curran (left) with participants in the USDAW Care in the Community briefing

With several years' experience of the implementation of community care under our belt, the principles underpinning the reforms - real choice for service users, real support for carers, increased access to and availability of flexible and sensitive services - are widely perceived as rhetoric rather than reality. One consequence is that the benefits and successes of community care are reported much less widely than the problems.

The problems, however, are very serious.

In the week that Kevin Maxwell defended his right to legal aid, a woman was applying to the Benefits Agency for a funeral grant for her husband - a situation she had never envisaged. She and her husband had worked all their lives, raised their family, supported them and were now enjoying their retirement. One evening, her husband collapsed - out of the blue. He was rushed to hospital and was diagnosed as having had a stroke. He was transferred from one hospital to another hospital and from there to a nursing home. His occupational pension partly funded his placement and she had to go on Income Support. For almost a year, unto he died, she visited him every day - her own health deteriorating in her sadness over what had been her husband, her concern that he was properly looked after, and her worry about how she would live without him. This situation, not untypical, illustrates a fundamental distinction between health care and social care needs. Health care needs are the responsibility of the NHS and social care needs are the responsibility of Social Work. However, services provided in hospital or by the NHS are free. Services provided or arranged by Social Work carry charges. As Colin McKay and Hilary Patrick, authors of *The Care Maze** state:

"People cannot assume that as they become older and frailer they will be able to go to hospital and stay there. The alternatives may be better...but they may have to pay some or all of the cost depending on their means. This has come as a great shock to a great many people."

There are other problems too.

Assumptions about carers abound. It is assumed, for example, that carers will continue to provide current levels of care. It is also assumed that the level of care will increase as greater numbers of people are enabled to live at home. The impact of charges for social care services on carers with low incomes requires to be thoroughly assessed if these assumptions are to underpin future community care planning. And, rarely stated directly, it is assumed that the existing gender imbalance win remain - that women will continue to care more than men, that women will continue to negotiate and manage child care, employment, home care and community care, that men, will continue to care less than women and resist any change in the status quo. This assumption is past its sell by date.

The gender imbalance is under challenge - from women as carers, service users, workers, trade unionists, voluntary workers, managers, politicians.

As the USDAW session demonstrated, women want to express their views about experience of community care and the cuts in funding; how negative attitudes to community care groups could be challenged; how good quality services should be provided without penalising those on low incomes; how local authorities can develop a network of alliances to promote community care and learn from experience; how standards of practice can be secured whatever the setting; how the political profile of community care can be progressed in the trade union and labour movement.

With the prospect of equal representation in a Scottish Parliament ahead comes a real opportunity to debate and progress issues ●

* Anyone who needs or is interested in more detailed information about any of these questions is encouraged to read *The Care Maze - The law and your rights to community care in Scotland* by Colin McKay and Hilary Patrick, published by Enable - (formerly the Scottish Society for the Mentally Handicapped) and the Scottish Association for Mental Health.

Anyone interested in community care developments in their local area can access the relevant Community Care Plan in libraries and from Social Work).

social comment...

The *Review*'s regular co
Assistant Secretary at th

new Labour, new pension

Grahame Smith was at the Labour Conference in Blackpool, where the issue of issue of the week was pensions...

It's changed days in the Labour Party right enough.

For the second year in a row the leadership managed to escape the Party Conference without a single defeat. However, at one stage it looked as if it might be a close run thing, particularly over pensions. Lo and behold, with a couple of manoeuvres which were very much old Labour, ie the union block vote and the classic fudge - a Commission on Pensions - the leadership got itself out of a sticky situation, kept the headlines right and sent everyone home happy.

Everyone, that is, except the pensioners.

So what *can* pensioners expect from new Labour?

As I understand it, the compromise negotiated by Jack Jones was that Labour would establish a Commission to examine the pensions issue and that, amongst other things, the Commission would look at the issue of the link between pensions and earnings and would also include pensioner representation.

The view of the 400 or so pensioners attending the Scottish Pensioners' Congress, an event jointly organised by the Scottish Pensioners' Forum and Age Concern Scotland in Glasgow, the week after the Conference, ranged from sceptical to downright hostile. Indeed, in their eyes, Jack Jones' mantle as the pensioners champion has well and truly slipped.

Barbara Castle is their champion now.

So what do pensioners want?

The demand of the Scottish Pensioners' Congress was for the State Retirement Pension to be available to all, set ultimately at 50% of average earnings for a pensioner couple and 33% of average earnings for a single pensioner, up-rated in line with increases in pensions or earnings, whichever is the greater. Based on average weekly earnings as of April 1996, that would give a pension of £115.50 for a single pensioner and £175 for a pensioner couple. There was also unanimous support for the restoration and the reconstruction of the State Earnings Related Pension Scheme.

But pensioners are practical - some might say too practical. They know they can't expect their pension to be almost doubled immediately, although it should be remembered, that at £61.15 for a single pensioner and £97.75 for a pensioner couple, the UK pension is one of the lowest in Europe.

The immediate demand of the Scottish Pensioners' Forum is for an £80 pension for a single pensioner (which equates to 23% of average earnings) and £130 for a pensioner couple (which equates to 37% of average earnings). This is a relatively modest demand and would bring the pension roughly into line with what it would have been had the link with average earnings not be severed by the Conservatives in 1980.

So are such demands justified when, according to the Government, pensioners' average incomes have increased by over 50% in real terms since 1979?

First, some basic facts. The increase in pensioners' average incomes can be accounted for by big increases for the richest pensioners. In the decade from 1979, the income of the richest 20% of pensioners rose by 45% for a single pensioner and 38% for a pensioner couple, while at the same time rose only by 5% for a single pensioner and 13% for a pensioner couple amongst the poorest 20%. During that time, the number of pensioners living on less than 50% of average earnings increased from 16% to 33%.

In 1979, the State Retirement Pension was worth 20% of average male earnings. It is now worth only 15%, and if it continues to decline at the same rate, will be worth only 7.5% by 2040.

Currently, 1.5 million pensioners continue to depend on Income Support, while a further 600,000 are eligible but do not claim their entitlement, while 75% of pensioners in the UK receive less than £100 per week in total income.

Surely, in a civilised society it is only right that all pensioners should enjoy a measure of financial independence and should share in any increases in the country's wealth.

The best way of achieving this is through adequate state pension provision up-rated in line with average earnings. state pensions are particularly important for the low paid, those working in industries without any occupational pension provision and those who spend long periods outside employment, caring for their children or elderly or disabled relatives. Many of these are, of course, women for whom the state pension is the best way of ensuring that they do not end up in poverty in their old age.

The argument against providing properly for pensions is that as the proportion of pensioners in the population gradually increases over the next 30 years or so, the economy will be unable to bear the cost.

This assertion is somewhat dubious. A number of commentators have pointed

n on social issues is edited by **Grahame Smith**, cottishTUC...

ers?

out that the effect on public expenditure in the UK over the next 50 years of providing adequate pensions will be around 5% of GDP, more than the cost of the recent economic recession.
By the middle of the next century it will cost around £20 billion a year more to re-establish the link between increases in pensions and increases in earnings, which would require a 33% increase in National Insurance contributions from both employers and employees over the next 40 years.

However, as net earnings will more than double over that period, even after such an increase in NI contributions, future generations would still enjoy higher incomes while being able to fund higher pensions.

It also shouldn't be forgotten that a full employment strategy would spread the amount of NI contributions over a much larger number of workers.

It is also worth noting that between 1979 and 1985 NI contributions increased from 16.5% to 19.45%, an increase more than would be required over coming decades to pay for an expanded state pension scheme.

Everyone knows that money can be found if the political will is there. The present Government has found billions of pounds to bail out the Channel Tunnel project; to underwrite the provision of armaments which ended up in Iran and Iraq, in contravention of its own policy; to sell off nationalised industries at a fraction of their costs; to finance tax cuts; and to keep a useless nuclear deterrent. Millions will be found to deal with the beef crisis, not forgetting the decision by MPs to award themselves a 26% pay increase.

It should also not be forgotten that billions of pounds have already been retained in the NI fund due to the cut in the link between pension increases and increases in average earnings, or that the Government spent £13 billion on bribing people to leave SERPS.

There is also a good case for boosting the NI fund. The NI contributions of UK employers are less than a third of those in Germany and under a quarter of those in France. There is also no reason why NI contributions should not be levied above the upper earnings threshold, currently £23,660 per year.

At last pensions has become a hot political issue and much of the credit for that must go to Jack Jones.

Despite the vilification heaped on him by many in the pensioners' movement it is reasonable to ask if pensioners would be any worse off had a compromise with the Labour leadership not been sought.

While a Pensions Commission might not deliver what pensioners want, it will provide a focus for debate and something around which the Pensioners' and trade union movements can mobilise.

In the short term, the trade union movement should add its weight to the Scottish Pensioners' Forum Campaign for the £80 and £130 pensions. The pay and conditions which many trades unionists enjoy today are a result of the efforts and sacrifices of today's pensioners. They need union support now and by supporting them, trades unionists can also help secure an adequate pension for themselves when they reach the age of retirement ●

If you want to support the Scottish Pensioners' Forum Pensions Campaign, contact Ann Garscadden at 16 Woodlands Terrace, Glasgow G3 6DF, telephone: 0141 332 4946, Ann's email address is: agarscadden@stuc.demon.co.uk

Financial donations from trade union branches and individuals would be welcome

Vorsprung durch rethink...contd

criteria on its own after opting out of the UK was absolutely "meaningless".

"If it's good for Scotland or not, is the only criterion that matters, and we can't decide that question before we know the facts".

He'd been preceded to the rostrum by a man from Glasgow University questioning whether the SNP's flagship policy of "Independence in Europe" was "a slogan or a philosophy?".

"At the bottom of our philosophy as a Scottish National Party is decentralisation within Scotland, and decentralisation to Scotland", thundered Mr Wilson - ears waggling in the wind - and indicating clearly that as far as he was concerned, neither proposition was compatible with the policy of signing up to EMU.

The Party's Parliamentary Leader, Margaret Ewing, then spoke wearily of her experiences reading long boring documents on convergence criteria as a member of a Westminster Select Committee. And of the generous offers of help in interpretation received from leading anti-Europeans: "The Tory Eurosceptics are sometimes dismissed as the intellectual wing of the Millwall Football Club. But this issue is about the right to have our say."

Then George Reid, the SNP candidate in Ochils, chewed his way past 35 other delegates who had submitted their speaker's cards in advance. But even with gum-in-cheek, the Turkey from Clackmannan made the best, most Blairite speech of the day:

"On grounds of principle, policy and pragmatism, we should go for a referendum to clear this matter up. Firstly, the SNP supports the principle (except when criticising Labour - ed) that people not parliament are sovereign under Scottish constitutional law. Secondly, the timescale for EMU is quite fluid, and there will be plenty of time after independence to work out our relationship with sterling. Thirdly, independence may give us room for bargaining with Europe, but there is precious little room for manoeuvre. There are really only two alternatives: siege economy outside Europe, or enterprise economy within. The sweatshop economy of Tory/Referendum Party defector Lord McAlpine is clearly not for us." ●

muddied waters

Margaret Lynch, Director of WAR ON WANT interviews WoW's Project Partner, **Hassan Bargouthi**, Director of the Democracy and Workers Rights Centre in Ramallah on the difficult situation facing Palestinian NGOs today...

ML: Hassan, we know that the situation in Palestine is difficult...what are the prospects for the peace process reaching a successful conclusion now?

HB: The peace agreements signed by the PLO and the state of Israel have led to a new political alignment inside Israel and Palestine - there are two political camps those who support peace and those who oppose peace. With the election of the Likud Government, we have seen the rise of traditional Zionist ideas - the Prime Minister Netanyahu has made it clear that Israel can offer only civil administration - land and water remain firmly within Israeli control. Their first initiative in government has been to expand existing Israeli settlements and to increase the number of new settlements in the West Bank.

The Israeli Government has adopted a policy of starving hundreds of thousands of Palestinians and placing them under siege, to the point where our cities, towns and refugee camps have become prisons. This is posing a serious threat to the peace process. In addition to barring tens of thousands of workers from returning to their Places of employment in Israel, the closure of the Gaza Strip has blocked the export of produce. Many thousands of workers return to their villages to eke out a living on their land only to find that it has been expropriated - or that they are barred from working the land because it lies too close to an Israeli settlement and they pose a "security" risk.

The number of checkpoints has been increased near the entrances of Palestinian towns and villages making it difficult for doctors and patients to reach hospitals and clinics, many residents who have tried to leave their villages to buy food and medicine have been arrested. The expansion of Israeli settlements has continued unabated. Such measures do not foster stability and only add to the sharp tension in the region. Acts of violence committed by Palestinians will only widen the scope of the extremists in Israel and settlers criminal activities are intended to derail the peace process. The criminal acts of this section of the Israeli population are no longer directed solely at the Palestinian people - as the world knows they resulted in the death of the Israeli Prime Minister Yitkzhak Rabin.

ML: How has the Palestinian Authority responded to Hamas terrorism?

HB: The Palestinian Authority has been under pressure to deal with Hamas and their supporters. They were congratulated in a resolution tabled at the European Parliament for showing determination to fight terrorism following the detention of 700 Hamas supporters earlier this year. Arafat is under great international pressure to show that the Palestinian Authority is capable of dealing with terrorism and quelling Hamas in particular. The pressure which the Israeli Government exerts on the Palestinian Authority leads many to believe that it is trying to create a subservient proxy in the West Bank. The Palestinian Authority is in a very difficult situation: if they don't deal with Hamas then they will lose international support - and if they do deal with Hamas their is a danger that the repressive measures they will have to employ will lose them support in the PNA controlled areas. The shoot out between members of the Palestinian Police and Hamas on 6 March heralded a difficult era whose effects on peace and stability in Palestine are unclear.

A split has emerged between the leadership of Hamas in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and the leadership in Jordan and other countries. The local Hamas leadership have resisted external pressure to increase military attacks and action. This happened largely because the local Hamas leadership came under pressure from Palestinians who are working hard to convince them that terrorism is not the way forward.

I believe that the best way to deal with

Hamas is to address the economic and social problems facing the 2.4 million Palestinians on the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Israel has a responsibility to help solve these economic problems - they could start by letting 200,000 workers get back to work and earn a living to support their families.

ML: There has been coverage of human rights abuses by the Palestinian Authorities in recent months - can you comment on this worrying development?

HB: It has been a great disappointment to those of us who have worked for many years in the struggle for the establishment of a democratic, secular state of Palestine to witness our Palestinian Authority violating basic human rights. It also causes us many problems at the DMRC: when we highlight Israeli abuses of human rights, it gets little coverage, when we highlight Palestinian abuses of human rights - we are all over the Israeli newspapers and television.

ML: Can you describe the current challenges facing Palestinian trades unions and NGOs

HB: The trade union movement and NGOs are facing a very difficult struggle at the moment. Palestinian workers desperately need a vibrant and healthy trade union movement - not least because Israeli policy forces border closures preventing between 40% and 60% of the labour force from travelling to work. Israeli policy has been to force Palestinians into low paid, unskilled jobs, health and safety conditions in the workplace are often abysmal. There are many struggles waiting to be fought. Since the middle of the seventies the Palestinian labour movement has witnessed a severe struggle between the different political forces who have attempted to control the Federation of Trade Unions. This struggle was not the result of disagreement on labour issues. The main cause was that the different political factions wanted to strengthen the position of their respective organisations - and saw the trade unions as a vehicle for achieving that objective. This struggle for political control has hindered the development of effective trade unions - and in addition the labour force has been left, after many years of occupation and poor working conditions, to toil alone without any real guidance or leadership to defend workers and their cause

The situation facing Palestinian NGOs is not dissimilar - political factions control many Palestinian NGOs, some of those involved treat the NGO as their own personal business - it exists for their profit and personal gain rather than for any great good it is doing in the community. Many NGOs are not accountable to the communities they serve. On the other hand there are Palestinian NGOs who are working hard and delivering excellent services to their communities - and they are working under great pressure. Some NGOs have also attracted the attention of the Palestinian Authority - it can be difficult for an NGO to openly criticise the authority for human rights abuses. There have been some arrests and the detention of Iyyad Sarraj is an example of this problem. If, on the other hand, the NGO is compliant, then the Palestinian Authority will close their eyes to corrupt practices within the NGO.

ML: There is a great debate at the moment about the role of overseas aid and solidarity. On the one hand there are those who argue that the goal of the establishment of a Palestinian state is best served by institution-building and funding the services which the Palestinian Authority and Municipal structures are struggling to create; on the other band the NGOs are arguing that funding for public services should still he channelled via the Third Sector, not least because of alleged corruption and political patronage within the Palestinian Authority. What is your response?

HB: This is a very important debate - many Northern Governments took decisions in the aftermath of the establishment of the Palestinian Authority to channel all of their aid via the PNA. They are now reviewing that decision, and many have decided to both fund the PNA for institution building - and fund NGOs in order to strengthen the democratic process. There needs to be a debate involving all of the players about the functions which are best provided at the level of the PNA and Municipalities, and the functions and services which are best provided by the NGOs. There has to be more effective examination of the purposes to which aid and solidarity are put: it amazes me as the Director of an NGO in Palestine that we often receive quite large donations from Northern donors who then never ask us to account for the money that we have received. Similarly, if Northern Governments and Agencies are going to fund services via the PNA or municipalities, they need to check out that their money has been well spent, and that ordinary Palestinians have benefited as a result. Perhaps we should examine the question of aid-conditionality in relation to human rights as a means of improving the practice of the Palestinian Authority. But we should also ensure that any NGOs that receive funding have local structures of accountability - and that funds are not going into the back pockets of individuals who run NGOs for their own personal gain.

I think that it is extremely important that voter education programmes organised in the run up to the elections to the Legislative Assembly are expanded upon, we need to teach our people what representative democracy means -and how to operate within a representative democracy. We need a system of local community councils which represent the different sections of the community and can engage in the political process on a day to day basis, and not just at election times. If we build a community which is engaged in the political process, there is no scope for human rights violations, no scope for corruption and ultimately no need for Northern NGOs or Governments to police" our NGOs or Government on our behalf ●

Rosina McCrae

A truly modern politics has been at work in Scotland over the last 6 years: an unparalleled unity of purpose amongst Scottish civic society to deliver an agreed package for a Scottish Parliament. Compromises had been made on all sides, some of which seemed too much to many Labour Party members - but none the less the necessity to present a united front was overriding.

Significant recognition had been given to the representation of women as MPs and to their involvement in the shaping of Scotland's future. Dale Spender comments: "We need to know why women disappear, why we are initiated into a culture where women have no visible past. We need to know how to break the closed circle which permits men to go on producing knowledge about themselves, pretending that we do not exist." Individual women from within and without political parties, had come together to break the circle, ensuring that we would be both seen and heard.

All was in place and settled - and then the bombshell of the referendum. I never dreamed then that an unnecessary tactic of a referendum could possibly move to a nonsensical one of isolating the Parliament's tax varying powers and then on to a ludicrous one of asking the Scottish people to exercise the tax varying powers twice - just in case they weren't sure the first time. All this driven by the Scottish Party Leadership - or was it the British Leadership since Blair's "confession" at Scots Night at Annual Conference? But then George Robertson claimed in the press next day that it really was his idea after all and Tony Blair was only defending his spokesperson - oh dear poor confused me!! God knows what the voters make of it all. Unfortunately, I think we know that one.

Only this Leadership could seriously have thought that Scottish Party members would have accepted a back me or sack me line on this. The Scottish scene had been misjudged and misread by those who had advised Blair on the isolation of tax varying powers.

What sort of Labour Leadership dismantles a unity of purpose around the Scottish Constitutional Convention Scheme and replaces it with a specific Labour Party Scheme?

Why have two major political Parties, the Scottish churches, the voluntary sector, civic and women's groups, etc behind you when you can go it alone?

Yes, excellent tactics for ensuring a Scottish Parliament and convincing the Scottish people of our commitment to it!!

Those involved in promoting a single question referendum based on the Convention Scheme had no alternative, and did so not to oppose the Leadership for the sake of it, but to save the Leadership from itself and more importantly to secure the Labour vote in Scotland where the SNP are our enemy.

This need to save the Leadership from itself was further validated at the August Executive when, rather than lose face, 20 individuals led by George Robertson himself forced through the colonialist position of 3 questions - one which Robertson was then forced to dump in the next week as the Scottish Labour Party became the laughing stock of Scotland.

This was an exercise in the dangers of creating a climate where loyalty to the Leadership position is paramount and where critical faculties are suspended to the extent that policies, are forced through irrespective of the obvious damage to our credibility.

And yet this Leadership continues unabashed in it's determination to make many of us feel we are 'the enemy' by simply attempting to influence policy through the Party's democratic processes.

As for us, we are rendered impotent by the burning desire for a Labour Government and, ironically given Blair's evangelical style, Sally Kempton's comments on the effects of organised religion on women seem entirely appropriate to sum up my feelings: "It's hard to fight an enemy who has outposts in your head."

It is to this Leadership's eternal discredit that many activists now feel strangers and unwanted in a movement to which they have given over years of vitality and energy.

It is also dangerous because these same activists not only know campaigning inside out but have a nose for problems and tensions within communities which takes years of experience and perception to build up.

Yet a hand of conciliation seemed to be extended when Tony Blair, in his speech to Annual Conference, spoke of those who had remained in the Labour movement over these difficult years. A gesture which was long overdue if it was meant with any sincerity and absolutely necessary in unifying Party forces for the forthcoming general election campaign.

This feelgood factor didn't list long - utterly shattered by the leak in the press the very next day that the Scottish Executive was to he "sorted" for its role in the Summer devolution debacle - well, to be specific, the sensible 18 who voted against Robertson's promotion of the 3 question fall-back proposal in the first place are to be removed.

Now I must be missing- something here; surely the fact that Robertson was then forced to ditch his own proposal because of the ensuing damage caused to the Party means that it should be himself and his other 19 cohorts who should be removed!

There then followed the usual pattern of denial by Jack McConnell and that the Party was modernising itself and must not be obsessed with its own internal politics. Well, why are you head-hunting members of the Executive and so close to a general election - what possible purpose does this serve, if not the obsession with internal polities of vengeance for vengeance sake?

The current Scottish Leadership has now moved into an unprecedented position in my history, a serious loss of both trust and loyalty - amongst many activists, certainly the majority of the Scottish Executive Committee and well beyond into our 'partners' in the Convention.

A united chant can often be heard of 'bring back, oh bring back, oh bring back Dewar and Elder to us"●

T&G SCOTLAND

GMB SCOTLAND
and
TGWU SCOTLAND

GMB SCOTLAND

Asbestos Conference

Woodside Halls, Glasgow
Wednesday 6th November

Chair: **Baillie Alex Mosson**
Lord Provost Depute
City of Glasgow Council

"Current Danger, Future Risk"
Nigel Bryson
National Director Health & Safety GMB

"The Human Cost of Asbestos-related Disease"
Dr A F Henderson
Consultant Chest Physician, Lorne & Islands District General Hospital

"The Victim and the Law"
Frank Maguire
Solicitor Advocate, Thompson's Solicitors, Glasgow

"Policy and Guidance on Asbestos Removal"
David Craxton
HSE Field Operation Division

"Westminster: A Case Study"
Alan Dalton
National Co-ordinator Health & Safety T&G

Supported by: Thompson's Solicitors
Facilitators: Clydeside Action on Asbestos

Delegate fee: £30. Further information and booking details can be obtained from:

CLYDESIDE ACTION ON ASBESTOS
245 HIGH STREET
GLASGOW G4 OQR
Tel: 0141 552 8852 **Fax: 0141 552 8352**

PRIZE CROSSWORD

Win a bottle of GMB whisky!

The first entry drawn from all correct responses which arrive before 30th November1996 will receive a bottle of best Scotch made by GMB members. Send your completed crossword to *Scottish Trade Union Review*, Dept of Economics, Glasgow Caledonian University, Cowcaddens Road, GLASGOW G4 0BA

SOLUTION TO REVIEW 77 CROSSWORD

Across: 1 Josphine, 8 Greet, 9 Dragonfly, 10 Cog, 11 Sole, 12 Snatch, 14 Ration, 15 Waiter, 18 Salami, 19 Spiv, 21 Sow, 23 Truculent, 24 About, 25 Ephemeral

Down: 1 Judas, 2 Shallot, 3 Ploy, 4 Infant, 5 Egyptian, 6 Bench, 7 Stagger, 13 & 14 Russian Roulette, 16 Top Gear, 17 Ambush, 18 Swoop, 20 Vital, 22 Guam

Winner of Review Crossword No 77 was N A Thomson from Stirling

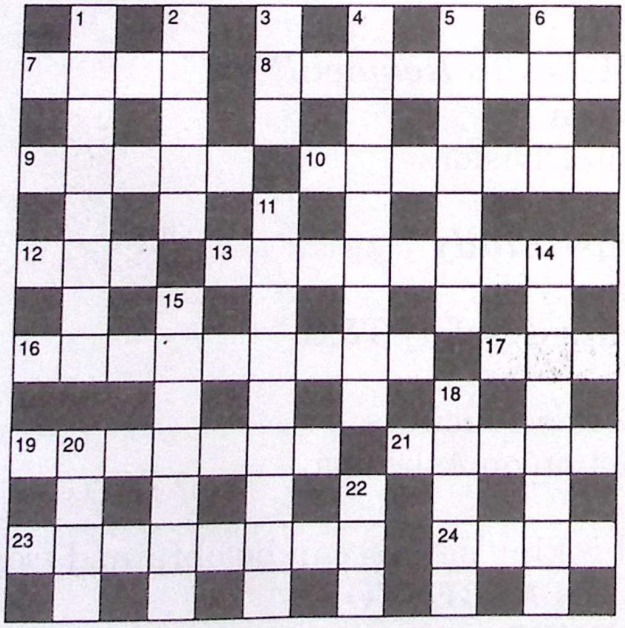
REVIEW 78 CROSSWORD

Across

7 Strange fruit has bruise (4)
8 Dated, like Scottish town (8)
9 First lady back in the fleet - not! (6)
10 Even more than English garrison town? (7)
12 See 17 across
13 Sounds like, without a hearing, last insect should be presumed innocent (9)
16 The daring are, oddly, stopped in the name of the law (9)
17 & 12 Notable crop of Celts (3,3)
19 Super bear follows ourselves and you, mostly (7)
21 To fall for, faintly (5)
23 I hear mother reclines in this place, a continent within a country (8)
24 Moving, often stressful (4)

Down

1 Large body of water is an improvement (8)
2 Comes before ski, but to follow in French (5)
3 Boils at 100 degrees C (3)
4 Someone did for Light Brigade (9)
5 Removes contents from 22 down (7)
6 English fence around Dublin was limit of enlightenment? (4)
11 Tiger kills people in Indian state (9)
14 Sounds like fresh flowers causing anxiety (8)
15 Man named after pussy does not feel Spanish (15)
18 Quick Irish satirist (5)
20 Morning paper repulses vermin (4)
22 Vehicle in front (3)



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BOOK REVIEWS

PENSIONS
a general guide

£3.45 from LRD,
78 Blackfriars Road,
London SE1 8HF

Although falling short of the recommendations made by trade unions, the 1995 Pensions Act, which comes into force next April, gives scheme members and trade unions important new rights concerning occupational pensions. Member-nominated trustees have new responsibilities, there are new rules covering disputes and the regulatory framework monitoring pensions has undergone significant changes.

This booklet describes the new rules and provides a comprehensive explanation of the UK pension system. It covers the basic state pension, the state earnings-related scheme (SERPS), occupational pensions - both final salary and money purchase - and personal pensions.

The new responsibilities for trustees are explained, along with the role of the advisers that they may appoint to help them. Scheme members and trade unions have new rights to information and these are summarised in the booklet. Rulings from the European Court have changed the retirement age and these are considered with respect to women and men. Whilst some schemes have allowed men and women to retire at 60, others have responded by raising the age for all. Rights for part-timers, women on maternity leave and those affected by divorce are all examined.

The booklet contains a useful glossary of terms commonly used in the pensions industry as well as useful sources of further information. It should be an invaluable source of reference for union reps, or anyone who needs to understand state pensions or occupational schemes.

WORKING AT HOME
a study of homeworking and teleworking

£6.00 from the Institute of Employment Rights,
160 Falcon Road,
London SW11 2LN

The recent session of the International Labour Conference (a tripartite body of the UN representing world governments, unions and employers) decided to adopt a new international framework Convention and a set of recommendations to national governments and employers to protect the interests of isolated and exploited workers. The British government and employers opposed giving minimum rights to this vulnerable and growing group of workers but were outvoted!

The author of this booklet, University teacher and researcher, Cilia Stanworth, shows that homeworkers and teleworkers are mainly women, are mostly badly paid and overwhelmingly lack rights to employment protection and social benefits. She says, among other things, that:

"New technology is being used to increase insecurity among teleworkers. In the recent past indignation has been rightly expressed about redundancy notices being

delivered to the home by motorcycle couriers. Now some companies are e-mailing their staff with notice of closure."

This booklet shows that both homeworking and teleworking are on the increase (by a factor of 3 since 1979) but from a fairly low base of around 100,000 in Britain. While some of the wilder predictions about an explosion of home and teleworking have not occurred, there is little doubt however that the expansion will go on. As employers seek to cut costs and exploit new technologies all forms of homeworking are likely to expand creating significant problems for an isolated workforce.

Homeworkers and teleworkers "can be disadvantaged because of their remoteness from the (base) workplace, and employers can use it to drive down costs, erode terms and conditions and isolate individuals. Examples of worsening conditions are not confined to lower status jobs, but also include groups with specialist skills."

The author talked to a number of trade unions in compiling her study and she provides and analysis of their responses, and concludes:

"International concern at European Union and ILO level is active and continuing. But it is the unions, together with supportive national legislation and regulation, which offer the most effective way forward. Only when many more homeworkers individually and collectively, have the strength of the unions around them will they be able to advance their economic and social positions."

This very interesting booklet deserves to be read by all those organising in the fields of homeworkers and teleworkers.

DEFENDING RECOGNITION

£2.35 from LRD,
78 Blackfriars Road,
London SE1 8HF

This booklet shows how unions can fight off attempts at derecognition and maintain their representation and bargaining rights at work. Recognition affords important legal benefits to unions, such as the right to information and consultation which are clearly examined in this booklet. The TUC has proposals for a new framework for representation rights at work and these are explained along with an outline of Labour Party proposals for recognition.

The booklet examines evidence on the extent of derecognition and finds that whilst cases of union derecognition have spread to many industries in recent years, the members covered by new recognition deals outnumber those affected by derecognition by nearly two to one.

Cases of derecognition, and attempted derecognition, are looked at in order to provide practical advice on how unions can deal with the threat, by being prepared and looking out for the early warning signs.

The booklet also looks at life after derecognition and shows the importance of recruitment and retention of members. A final section looks at some of the increasing number of new union recognition deals being agreed - in many areas previously hostile to trade unions

An injury to one is an injury to all

Come and join the

St Andrew's Day march against Racism and Fascism

in **Glasgow** on

Saturday 30 November

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Hear **Diane Abbott** speak

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Dance in the streets with the
Black Star Steel Band

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Assemble 10.30am Blythswood Square
March at 11.00am to City Halls

An injury to one is an injury to all

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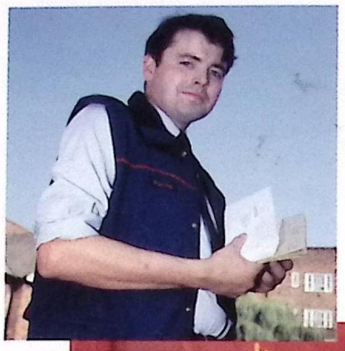
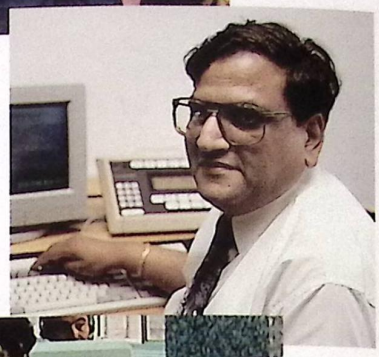
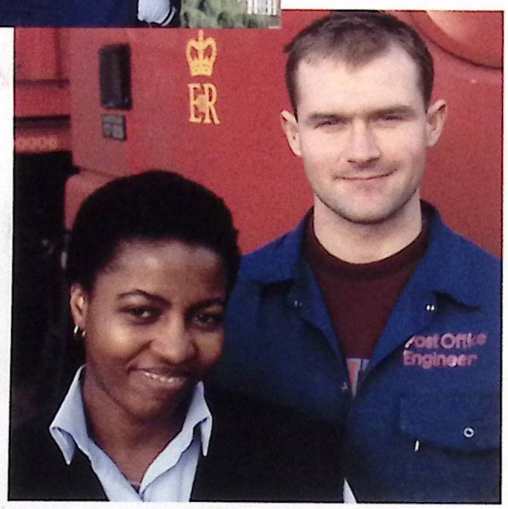
Contact **Peter Smith** or **David Howie** on 0141 331 3302 for bookings or send your artwork/text and logo to the Review's address given on page 2.

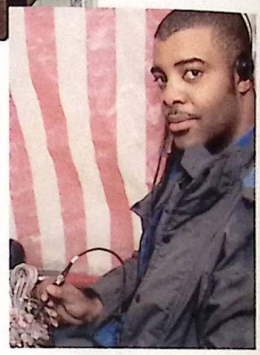
The Communication Workers Union is delighted to tell the labour movement that





We are 1





The CWU was created last year with the merger of the National Communications Union and the Union of Communication Workers.

WE ARE ONE

with all trade unions campaigning to preserve public services and utilities

with all those working for a new Labour Government

with everyone campaigning against discrimination

Since then, we have continued our efforts to

- give all workers in the communication industry a voice in their union
- build on our successful campaign that halted post office privatisation
- campaign for ordinary people to benefit from new technology – especially the information superhighway
- argue for the regulation of national utilities based on community benefits not political dogma
- defeat and repeal anti-trade union legislation

COMMUNICATION WORKERS UNION

CWU House, Crescent Lane, London SW4 9RN
Telephone 0171 622 9977

Greystoke House, 150 Brunswick Road, London W5 1AW
Telephone 0181 998 2981

Joint general secretaries: Alan Johnson and Tony Young